ABSTRACT

EXPERIENCES OF UNITED METHODIST MINISTERS

SERVING IN CROSS-CULTURAL-CROSS-RACIAL APPOINTMENTS

by

Jessie C. Keaton

The purpose of this research was to explore the experiences of United Methodist ministers in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments, while probing the correlation between the inter-cultural aspects of the congregation's worldview (as perceived by the pastor and congregants) and the nature of the pastor's experience in ministry. A self-administered researcher-assembled survey completed by 379 respondents explored pastors' and church members' perceptions of their congregations' openness, attitudes, biases, religious beliefs, and experiences concerning racially and culturally different persons. Interviews held with a smaller number of ministers chosen from the survey sample explored in greater depth their overall cross-racial ministry experiences, including their perceptions of their congregations' worldviews.

Study results revealed incongruities between the level of congregational openness to persons who are different perceived by selected church members, and the level of congregational openness experienced by their culturally/racially different pastor. In addition, pastors of certain racial/ethnic backgrounds tended to report more favorable cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry experiences than did their colleagues of certain other racial ethnicities. A consistent thread throughout all the pastors' experiences was the tendency to rank the success of their cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments in terms of theological response and relational integrity as opposed to quantitative markers.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled

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SERVING IN CROSS-CULTURAL-CROSS-RACIAL APPOINTMENTS

presented by

Jessie C. Keaton

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EXPERIENCES OF UNITED METHODIST MINISTERS SERVING IN CROSS-CULTURAL-CROSS-RACIAL APPOINTMENTS

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of

Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Introduction

Underneath the denominational logo of the United Methodist Church Web site, the following words appear: “Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors” (*United Methodist Church*). Every Sunday morning, messages of welcome appear on church signs, worship bulletins, first-time visitors’ packets, and brochures around and within United Methodist Churches throughout America. For the newcomer examining the plethora of denominational literature and propaganda, United Methodist churches would seem to be “open” and hospitable to all persons.

During the past 3 ½ decades, one group of individuals has had the opportunity to gain experience and critical insight into congregational openness to racial diversity from a unique perspective. These ministers—black, white, Asian, Hispanic—have answered the call to pastoral leadership in congregations where the predominant ethnicity is different from their own. In *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2004* the denomination differentiates these relationships as “cross-cultural and cross-racial appointments” (593).

Comment [ar1]: NEED REFERENCE

I became involved in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry in 1998 while enrolled in a field education experience through Duke Divinity School. As a requirement for earning the Master of Divinity degree, I served as student pastoral intern with a predominantly white congregation in Durham, North Carolina. The clergywoman who led this church was an African-American. This experience was a tremendous blessing and opportunity. I learned firsthand about the tremendous joys and breakthroughs that occur as people from

all walks of life embrace the *koinonia* of worship, fellowship, and ministry of God's kingdom together. At the same time, I realized the church had much ground to break in order to reach out to the community in the way it desired. I also discerned the hard work, tenacity, and clarity of vision required when congregations, pastors, and communities attempt to cross over racial and cultural boundaries.

In my years as a United Methodist minister, I have continued to serve in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. Over the years I have met a number of pastors, district superintendents, and bishops of different genders and ethnicities who have answered the call to minister cross-cultural-cross-racially. In many ways, the stories of their experiences have been as diverse as the persons and their cross-cultural affiliates, yet certain recurring elements seem to thread through their collective experiences, including blessings and sacrifices, triumphs and failures. These stories contain valuable nuggets of information, revelation, reflection, and wisdom I believe provide the prescriptive ingredients for nurturing healthy cross-cultural relationships in the Church and world.

The Problem

The problem for this study lies in the dissonance between the stated vision of the United Methodist Church (UMC) to be an inclusive church with open itineracy and the level to which that vision of inclusiveness has become a widespread current reality. According to statistics released in spring 2005, only around 1,258 out of nearly 45,000 United Methodist clergy members were serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry (General Commission on Finance 5). This figure alone suggests the considerable work still lying ahead toward bringing racial groups together in local church ministry.

Hence, the study focused specifically on the experiences of ministers serving in

cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. It strove to identify the factors characterizing cross-cultural-cross-racial experiences, as well as those factors promoting and inhibiting the effectiveness of such appointments.

United Methodists today speak often about incarnational ministry. Usually they are referring to those acts of humble Christian service through which believers become Christ's tangible presence in the lives of others. In particularly relevant ways, Christ has made himself incarnate during the past three decades through the many clergymen and clergywomen who have followed his will in accepting cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments in the UMC. Typically their experiences portray aspects of Christ's triumph and suffering, reception and rejection.

My own experiences in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry have been mostly positive, memorable, and cherished; nevertheless, challenges directly related to negative ethnic and cultural perceptions characterize each experience to different degrees. As I have ministered across cultural and racial lines, I have noticed that the more opportunities church members and congregations have had to interact one-on-one with members of other races and cultures, the less likely they are to resist cross-cultural-cross-racial relationships in ministry. Conversations with clergy at local, annual conference, and jurisdictional levels tend to affirm this observation.

I have learned that some congregations receive racially different pastors in a spirit of Christian love and willing cooperation. Others voice initial reservation but are willing to give the relationship between pastor and congregation a chance to develop and prosper. In many instances, these cross-cultural-cross-racial liaisons between pastor and congregation withstand the test of time and ultimately flourish; others succumb to an

early demise. Some congregations, groups within congregations, and/or individuals bitterly resist receiving a racially different pastor from the outset and never change. Such situations present grueling and persistent challenges for pastors, congregations, and the denomination.

The Denomination's Vision for Inclusive Ministry

Since the 1968 merger of the United Evangelical Brethren Church and the Methodist Church, the United Methodist denomination has emphasized its rich heritage of diversity. The Church's constitution and polity guide, the *Book of Discipline*, represents over two hundred years of denominational history. This book is replete with affirmations of the denomination's support for inclusiveness. I have identified three major ways in which the denomination seeks to be inclusive according to the *Book of Discipline.*

First, United Methodist ideology makes a historical claim of ministry to all "without regard to ethnic origin, economic condition, gender, age, or the disabilities of its constituents" (*Book of Discipline* v). In many undeniable ways, the church has reason to celebrate these claims. Nevertheless, insofar as the overwhelming majority of UMC churches continue to be mono-ethnic, and the number of cross-cultural local church leaders is still comparatively low, much work remains for the validation of these claims.

Secondly, the denomination acknowledges the call of individuals with recognizable gifts and graces, lay and ordained, to servant leadership. These persons are obliged to form Christian disciples "in the covenant community of the congregation" (*Book of Discipline* 92). As Wesley encouraged, servant leaders help Christians learn how to watch over one another in love and thus prepare the church for its mission in the

world. The UMC specifically calls its ordained elders and deacons to devote themselves wholly to the work of the church (*Book of Discipline* 92).

The principle of inclusion applies universally to every aspect of life in the United Methodist Church. Denominational polity affirms that "inclusiveness means the freedom for the total involvement of all persons who meet the requirements of the United Methodist *Book of Discipline* in the membership and leadership of the Church at any level and in every place" (93). Hence, the policy for making itinerant appointments of United Methodist clergy further undergirds and unequivocally supports the appointments of pastoral leadership across racial and cultural lines: "Open itineracy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, except for provisions of mandatory retirement" (307).

The ministers I know who are called to serve cross-cultural-cross-racially usually come to their congregations with the attitude of a servant of Christ. They are no less committed to holistic dedication in leading their congregations in ministries of servanthood, discipleship, mutual accountability, and Christian *koinonia* than those called to mono-racial congregations. Congregations (or groups within congregations) resisting a minister solely on the basis of race or culture circumvent the call of Christ and the reconciling work of the Holy Spirit in their midst. Ministers who persevere in serving such congregations out of love and a determination to accomplish the will of God in Christ may suffer early burnout and a diminished sense of self-worth. The same observation holds true in the case of lay leadership. Sometimes when minority laypersons respond to the call to servant leadership in cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations, members of the congregation's dominant ethnic group fail to provide the support and

resources necessary to carry out the ministry successfully.

Thirdly, not only does the denomination support racial and cultural inclusiveness within the church, it also takes a strong public stance. Paragraph 162 of "The Social Community" declares the denomination's support of the rights of racial and ethnic persons (as well as religious minorities, children, young people, the aging, women, persons with disabilities, and homosexuals) within society (*Book of Discipline* 104).

Reasons for Fulfilling the Vision

Whereas the UMC has a clear and commendable perspective for domestic and global inclusion, statistical evidence shows the inclusive vision conveyed in the pages of the *Discipline* is still a formative dream. Nevertheless, as the United Methodist Church in America strives to live out its vision of universal inclusion, it places itself in an enhanced position to evangelize transitional and ethnically diverse American communities.

According to statistics derived from the United Methodist Church Web site, clergy members in the United Methodist denomination in the United States total 44,854. As of December 2007, some 1,650 of those clergy (approximately 4 percent) were serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. Therefore, most of the remaining 43,204 clergy (96 percent) continue to serve mono-ethnic congregations ("U. S. Data"). I personally am aware of several older United Methodist congregations in transitional neighborhoods that decided to close their doors after nearly (or over) a century of ministry rather than open them to members and pastors of other cultures and ethnicities. In America, whites, blacks, Asians, and Hispanics come together to live in neighborhoods, work, recreate, learn, shop, bank and invest, receive medical and dental care, dine, seek legal justice, make penal restitution, and protect and defend their country.

The witness of Christian congregations refusing to open their doors to people for whom Christ died—solely for reasons of skin color, nationality, or culture—is painfully incongruent with the life and gospel of Jesus Christ.

According to statistics released in April 2005 by the National Council of Churches (NCC), growing denominations are those reaching out to people. As the NCC Deputy General Secretary for Research and Planning, the Rev. Dr. Eileen W. Lindner also edits the Council's *Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches*. "If you look at the churches that grew the most, they intentionally reach out to bring people in," explains Lindner in an article about the *Yearbook* written by Pauline J. Chang. Lindner notes that such churches more closely fit what contemporary Americans seek.

Integrity is a high value for younger Christians in postmodern society. Postmoderns do not automatically ascribe honor, authority, respect, and validity to churches, clergy, and Christians simply because of who they *say* they are. They are acquainted with far too many politicians, clergy, churches, businesspersons, salespersons—even presidents—who claim to adhere to a particular ethical standard, yet practice another. Therefore, many postmoderns will only be convinced to participate in those institutions and organizations in which the adherents' deeds are reflective of organizational creeds. This principle applies especially to religious organizations.

In addition, many postmoderns are hungry for authentic community and relationships. While the secular world is becoming a rich multicultural tapestry, it peers into Christian sanctuaries and finds mono-ethnic congregations. The church has an optimal opportunity to take the lead in providing persons both young and old a safe place in which to learn how to live together with diverse persons. The expectation of seeing

Christ's greatest commandment, "You shall love your neighbor" (Matt. 5:43) lived out by Christian congregations is a reasonable one. Cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry is one way to begin.

Mono-racial congregations do have a legitimate place in the twenty-first century. Some churches are located in areas devoid of racial or cultural diversity. Other churches provide vital ministry to first-generation immigrants. These persons often are struggling to learn the language and culture of a new and strange land. Such individuals and groups need the nurture, stability, and comfort the familiar language and customs of mono-ethnic congregations provide as they worship and express their faith together.

The United Methodist denomination has in place the necessary global, connectional, political, and creedal structures to posture it to minister relevantly and effectively in a multicultural, postmodern world. Cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments allow congregations and pastors to lead the way in building bridges and forging authentic relationships across racial and cultural boundaries.

The Need to Bridge Clashing Worldviews

Anthropologist and former seminary professor, Darrell Whiteman, speaks of a worldview as being the "central governing set of concepts, presuppositions, and values that a society lives by." Most persons normally are not aware of their own worldviews, even though they underlie human behavior and give it meaning. A worldview, says Whiteman, is like an iceberg. Although it is a concrete reality, it is hidden underwater and out of sight. Religious beliefs are that visible part of the worldview found at the surface of the water. Conscious human preferences and behaviors are at the tip of the iceberg.

Most denominational efforts to bridge peoples of diverse ethnic groups and

cultures center on highly visible areas of difference projected into full view at the tip of the iceberg. These include such differences as preference in worship and preaching styles, acceptable music forms, dress, formality or informality, and other expressions of conscious beliefs and values. Attempts to achieve consensus or uniformity at the level of conscious beliefs and values alone are insufficient to guarantee authentic community and genuine relationships among persons of various cultures and ethnicities. Such conscious cultural beliefs only represent one-tenth of the iceberg of culture.

Successful cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments require the more intensive work of identifying, understanding, and learning how to negotiate those embedded cultural perceptions, values, and myths shaping worldviews. These strong affective cultural biases lie hidden below the cultural waterline and beneath the consciousness of the individual. According to Whiteman, human beings learn their worldview unconsciously during their first five years of life. Without intervention, the worldview stays with individuals for the rest of their life. Hence, each individual's experience of the real world makes sense in terms of his or her worldview.

The implicit, embedded values constituting worldviews often differ widely from culture to culture. Concealed from the consciousness of the members of the culture, these unconscious beliefs, values, and perceptions govern the notions of a cultural group about what is "normal," "standard," and "orthodox."

Culturally determined ideals rarely represent absolute truths universally applicable to all people. Instead, they represent the lens through which a particular culture views the world. Culturally determined ideals inform individual and societal preferences for modesty, beauty, appropriate child rearing, hierarchy in relationships,

cooperation or competition, and arrangement of physical space. These ideals also influence cultural patterns of a good life, social power, responsibility, problem solving, status or class mobility, justice, sin, etc. According to Eric Law, these cultural patterns come implicitly from parents, church, and community. They "seep" down into the hidden layers of the worldview, forming the "instinct" of the culture. Because they are implicit and not consciously learned, they are difficult to change (qtd. in McSpadden 51-52).

Over time, different cultures integrate different cultural instincts, ideals, and practices. That tendency does not mean one culture is right and the other wrong; nor does it mean one culture's way of thinking or doing things is better or worse than another culture's way. Such bifurcated "either/or" and "good/bad" thinking in terms of cultural beliefs and values is what often leads dominant groups to push for the stripping away of minority groups' cultural norms. Personal awareness of their own embedded cultural beliefs and values helps congregations and pastors to develop good relations cross-cultural-cross-racially. Conversely, tensions erupt between congregations and pastors as members of the congregation (the dominant culture) push to assimilate the pastor (the minority culture) into their (presumably) correct or better ways of seeing and doing things.

Context of the Study

The context of this study is the United Methodist denomination in the United States of America. A 2005 report provided by the General Board of Higher Education, Division of Elders and Local Pastors, offers a breakdown of the 2005 statistics. Of the 44,987 clergy members then serving, some 33,049 were actively serving as full-time elders, 1,141 as full-time deacons, 2,198 as probationary elders, 206 as probationary

deacons, 2,180 as associate members, and 6,213 as part- and full-time local pastors. Out of the total 44,987 ministers, approximately 1,258 were currently serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments.

In the pages of the *Book of Discipline*, the United Methodist Church publishes its obligation to bear a faithful Christian witness to Jesus Christ, the living reality at the center of the church's life and witness. To fulfill this obligation, the church strives to reflect critically on its biblical and theological inheritance (v-vi). With the uniting of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968, the church made another long-awaited uniting move in the inclusion of the black members of its only racially determined jurisdiction, the Central Jurisdiction, into its mix of geographically determined jurisdictions. At the same time, women received full status clergy rights. Since the unification of 1968, the church has endeavored to become a community in which all persons, regardless of racial or ethnic background, can participate at all levels of its connectional life and ministry. Increasing numbers of Hispanics and Asians immigrating into the United States has significantly increased the diversity of the current church as well as its potential membership (19-20, 83-96).

The United Methodist Church has several distinctives influencing any study or discussion of cross-cultural-cross-racial or multicultural ministry. The denomination is an old mainline denomination with nearly three hundred years of history. Its core beliefs are still intact, but the theological beliefs and practices of its constituency run the gamut of extremely conservative to extremely liberal. The social principles of the United Methodist Church express the denomination's commitment to act on matters of social importance (*Book of Discipline* 95).

As the population of America becomes increasingly global, the denomination's challenge to live out of its constitutional mission and ministry regarding its increasingly diverse membership is critical for maintaining spiritual and social integrity.

In the 10 January 2005 issue of *New World Outlook* magazine, Tracy McNeal reports on five ethnic/language ministry plans and prospects to continue them through the 2008 General Conference. These plans, supported by special church funds and specifically charged with making disciples for Jesus Christ, name five United Methodist minority communities in the United States—Asian-Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, Korean-Americans, Native Americans, and African-Americans. At present, UMC members from these five communities make up approximately 25 percent of the denomination's membership in the United States. The remaining 75 percent of the membership is largely white and of European descent. If current demographic trends continue, the white American population will fall to below 50 percent of the total population in the United States within the next decade. Rev.Eli Rivera, former coordinator of the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries, states that the church must reflect the ethnic mix of society in order to continue to grow. The implications of this data warrant strategic planning for increasingly cross-cultural and multicultural ministries.

Over the years, the United Methodist Church has worked hard to heal the wounds caused by color line rifts. Inclusive, nondiscriminatory principles now replace explicitly racist policies. The church has made intentional efforts to reverse long-term effects of institutionalized racism. The denomination has created programs designed to correct the imbalance of minority representation at all levels. The national plans are helping to

dismantle those barriers to full inclusion that legislation cannot erase. These plans aim to level all differences in language, national or ethnic origin, history, and culture. Rather than uniformity, these plans strive for unity within diversity (McNeal).

Diversity at the level of episcopal leadership is one marker of the denomination's steps toward inclusion. A chart in the September-November edition of *The Flyer* notes the diversity of U. S. bishops (General Commission on the Status 5). As of November 2004, the UMC had fifty active bishops in its five U. S. jurisdictions (plus the bishop of Puerto Rico). Whereas minorities comprised some 37 percent of the total Episcopal leadership during the 2005-2008 quadrennium, the percentage of minority bishops in the two southern jurisdictions is noticeably lower.

Purpose

Existing studies of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry experiences generally acknowledge the influence of cultural worldviews, cultural identity, and social context upon the experience of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry (e.g., McSpadden 16). Few known studies have explored in depth the relationship between the congregation's cultural worldview (attitudes, beliefs, values, presuppositions, and biases) and the pastor's overall experience of ministry.

The overarching purpose of this two-phase, sequential mixed-methods study was to explore the experiences of United Methodist ministers who serve as pastors in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry appointments. The first phase involved a simple random sampling of all United Methodist ministers in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. Pastors and selected members of their congregations received survey packets containing twenty-six questions. In this phase, quantitative research addressed the pastors' and selected

congregants' perceptions of their congregations' worldview characteristics pertaining to interactions and relationships with persons of different cultures and racial ethnicities. In the second phase, qualitative telephone interviews explored the overall ministry experiences of pastors selected from the quantitative study. The purpose of these phone interviews was to receive critical feedback about each pastor's experience serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Research Questions

The study centered around the following four research questions.

Research Question #1

What major factors lead to cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments?

Research Question #2

How do United Methodist pastors serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments describe their experiences?

Research Question #3

What implicit and explicit cultural beliefs, attitudes, values, and myths surfaced within the context of the pastor and congregation's ministry together?

Research Question #4

What major factors contribute to the success and/or lack of success of cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments?

Definition of Terms

I have used one term within the context of this study that bears defining and explanation in this section: cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment. Also, I will explain my use of terms relating to racial or ethnic designations.

Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Appointment

The term “cross-cultural-cross-racial” characterizes the appointment of a minister whose worldview (i.e., values, instincts, beliefs, myths, religious behaviors) and racial ethnicity are different from the racial ethnicity and prevailing worldview of the congregation to which he or she is appointed. I use this term with reservation for several reasons.

First, I am aware of how the concept of *race* immediately, arbitrarily, and inordinately skews critical evaluations and assessments of personhood that individuals make about one another. During my last pastoral appointment, several persons from Liberia were members of my congregation. Based on outward physical features, one would assume I, an African-American, had a lot in common with the Liberian people (an assumption often derived by the white members in the congregation). Nevertheless, cultural differences between the Liberians and me were astounding. Generally, I shared much more in common with the white American members than I did with the Liberians in the congregation. I encountered much the same experience when I came to Asbury Theological Seminary to complete doctoral studies. Often African students and I would greet one another in smiling expectation of cultural familiarity only to be surprised that the distinct differences of language and/or dialect, national origin, culture, and worldview separated us.

Second, I am convinced the words *race* and *racism* are so fraught with emotional connotations that their usage often gets in the way of meaningful and helpful dialogue about conscious and embedded cultural values, beliefs, myths, and worldviews.

Third, because I believe what society labels as *race* has little to do with anything

beyond external physical features such as skin and eye color, hair texture, and lip thickness, I believe the more genuine and valid conversations have to do with differences in *cultures* and *worldviews*. Therefore, I prefer to speak about *cross-cultural* and *multicultural* factors, characteristics, and experiences rather than *cross-racial* ones.

Nevertheless, most of the extant denominational literature employs the term *cross-racial* to characterize the appointment of a minister whose worldview (including embedded values, instincts, beliefs, and myths) and religious behaviors have been shaped within one cultural context to a congregation whose worldview(s) and religious behaviors have been shaped within a different cultural context. *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2004*, contains one reference to "cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments" (593). Therefore, for the sake of clarity and consistency with the commonly used terminology, I have chosen to use the term *cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments* to designate pastoral appointments crossing the borders of culture and external physical characteristics.

Racial Designations

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are used according to context.

African-American. Black and African-American are used interchangeably, depending upon context. An African-American person in the United States whose ancestors, usually in predominant part, were indigenous to Sub-Saharan Africa. Many African-Americans possess European, Native American, and Asian ancestry as well.

Anglo-American. Anglo, Euro-American, and white are terms used interchangeably. An American, especially an inhabitant of the United States, whose ancestry is Western European, is an Anglo-American.

Hispanic American. Hispanic and Hispanic American are used interchangeably. A United States citizen of Spanish culture whose origins are from Mexico, South America, Central America, or the Caribbean Island, regardless of race, is an Hispanic American.

Asian-American. Asian or Asian-American are terms used interchangeably. A United States citizen having origin in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific islands is an Asian-American.

Native American. A person having origin in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition is a Native American.

Subjects

The United Methodist Church shows the number of clergy in the United Methodist denomination in the United States as being close to 45,000. The denomination has the following numerical composition:

8,249,579 lay members,

44,854 clergy members,

1,289,766 preparatory members,

35,275 local churches,

26,348 pastoral charges,

520 districts,

63 conferences,

50 bishops/episcopal areas, and

5 jurisdictions (“U. S. Data”).

Subjects chosen for this study were representative of each of these categories, except preparatory members.

Methodology

This exploratory study in the descriptive mode analyzed the experiences of United Methodist ministers serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments in the United States. The study utilized both a researcher-designed interview questionnaire to explore the overall experiences of selected clergy participants and a researcher-assembled survey to examine more closely the relationship between a congregation's worldview and a pastor's experience of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of 1,650 United Methodist ministers in the United States, approximately four percent of the total 44,854 clergy members listed above. At my request for an updated listing, the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) of the United Methodist Church supplied a spreadsheet listing names of ministers who were serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry as of December 2007. The computer-generated simple random sampling method used for the survey ensured the derivation of a proportionate representation of the numeric populations in the five geographic jurisdictions in the United States.

Variables

Intervening variables that may have influenced the outcomes of this study for pastors included the subjectivity of the pastor's perceptions as well as personal demographics encompassing gender, the pastor's *own* cultural worldview, level of pastoral experience, level of cross-cultural-cross-racial experience, familiarity with and

sensitivity to the congregational culture, emotional intelligence, language, and communication skills.

Intervening variables of church demographics included the median age and education level, cross-cultural-cross-racial experience of the congregation (particularly of leaders and key influencers), the scope of worldview differences among individual members of the congregation, and the congregational willingness and readiness to embrace attitudinal change.

The level of denominational pre-placement planning and ongoing support to the minister, extraordinary circumstances causing tension in the pastor-congregation relationship at the time of the survey, and the general social distance among cultural groups in the particular geographic region were also intervening variables.

Instrumentation

This study utilized two instruments: a survey of congregational openness and a pastoral interview questionnaire. The first instrument explored the congregation's openness to persons who represent a different culture or race from the prevailing culture or race of the congregation. The survey, structured in six-point Likert scale format, included a researcher-designed scale, selected questions adapted from the *Experiences and Attitudes Survey* by Sonia V. Gonsalves, Tim Haresign, and Joe Marchetti (2-7), and questions that delved into the religious aspects of beliefs and values listed by Charles Ware (38-39). The statistics derived from these surveys provided one indication of the experience of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry in each geographic region from both the minister's perspectives and those of their congregants.

The second instrument was a pastoral interview questionnaire containing eleven

probing questions. These questions were designed to gather important data pertaining to the pastors' perceptions of the congregations' beliefs, attitudes, and values, and to the pastors' overall experience of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Data Collection

After contacting denominational officials to gain their support for the study and completing necessary pretests, computer-selected participants received survey packets by United States Postal Service. Each of the 384 pastors identified received a survey packet containing eleven surveys including one marked "pastor," and ten others for each of ten congregants who represented, as closely as possible, the diversity of the congregation.

Three hundred and eighty-four survey packets containing a total of 4,224 surveys were mailed to the pastors selected by random sampling and their congregants. Each packet contained the following items: instruction sheets, consent forms, survey forms, and a self-addressed, self-stamped 9" x 11" manila envelope for returning the packets to me by United States mail. Analysis of the results compared and contrasted the ministers' perception of their congregations' openness to cultural/racial difference with the perceptions of selected members of the congregations. Similarly, the perceptions of pastors and their congregants' about how religious beliefs informed their congregations' openness to persons who are different were compared and contrasted. Correlations were made between the perceptions reported by pastors and those of their congregants.

Out of the 384 randomly-selected survey participants, thirty-nine pastors responded. Of these respondents, twenty-five ministers representing the five geographic jurisdictions received invitations and accepted selection for one-on-one phone interviews. Demographic characteristics considered in selecting these pastors included gender,

ethnicity, and length of experience in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. To ensure greater uniformity and reliability of results, all interviews took place by phone. The average time of the interviews ranged from forty-five minutes to one hour.

Once transcribed, interview data was categorized under one of the four research questions, checked for validity and reliability, and presented in table form.

An interview protocol of eleven probing questions ensured the participants provided information relative to the research questions while lending uniformity to the interview process.

Data Analysis

The research statistician tabulated the survey data by computer, and then followed a standardized protocol for analyzing and interpreting the results. Data summaries consisted of descriptive and inferential statistics, means, and standard deviations.

The statistician also listed the transcribed data from the pastoral interviews under the headings of the four research questions. The use of the qualitative data analysis computer software program, *NVivo 7*, greatly enhanced the data analysis process by allowing chunks of interview data to be identified, retrieved, isolated, and grouped. By regrouping these same data, I was able to make further configurations and correlations. As a result, additional themes and patterns began to emerge that enriched the findings of the quantitative research.

Comment [ar2]: **Must insert reference in Works Cited for this computer software program. Follow Slade's example for computer software and list it under "N" because it will be put under the name *N Vivo 7* (note italics in Works Cited).**

Delimitations

This study was delimited to include only churches within the United Methodist denomination in which ministers and congregations were of different cultures and racial ethnicities.

Generalizability

Findings in this study may be applicable to denominations where the average length of clergy tenure is similar to that of United Methodist pastors in the appointive process.

Theological Foundations

My theological reflection concerning this study consisted of a convergence of three strands: (1) Whiteman's anthropological teachings about the theological shaping of worldviews, (2) Wesley's affective anthropology and soteriology, and (3) the biblical concept of the kingdom of God as conceptualized by Wesley, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul D. Hanson, and others.

Comment [ar3]: Corrected

When viewed within the context of Whiteman's iceberg metaphor, worldview lies submerged underneath the water. Behavior emerges above the water at the tip of the iceberg. Religion, including beliefs, is found at the surface.

A Right Heart: Kingdom Requirement for Christ and Wesley

When Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount, he said to the crowd, "For I tell you that *unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven* [emphasis mine]" (Matt. 5:20). Wesley believed that the righteousness of which Jesus spoke had little to do with outward deeds. Rather, the righteousness that "surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law" has to do with one thing: a right heart. Brad D. Strawn and G. Michael Leffel attempt to envision a moral psychology consistent with Wesley's affective anthropology and soteriology. They deduce that for Wesley, Christian salvation (i.e., conversion) is tantamount to the renewal of a believer's affections and tempers of heart (will) rather

than a mere change of mind (understanding) or right actions (liberty). Strawn and Leffel make the following statement about Wesley's focus of salvation:

> Wesley believed that holiness of thought, word, and action would flow from such renewed dispositions [of will, understanding, and liberty] and he identified the essential goal of all Christian disciplines as the recovery of holy tempers (especially love). Although it is abundantly clear that he affirmed and lived the ortho*doxy* of the historical Christian creeds, just as he affirmed and lived the ortho*praxis* of the works of piety and the works of mercy, *it is the inward state of orthokardia (right heart) where he located the essence of true religion* [emphasis mine]. (352)

Wesley's understanding of true religion concurs with the teachings of Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. He establishes a right heart as being the vital precondition for participation in Christ's inclusive kingdom. Indeed, a right heart infuses the Christian believer who holds right *creeds* with the ability to live and practice right *deeds*.

Wesley clearly understood a heart that was right and formed in true religion as a heart bent toward loving and caring for others. In the Beatitudes, Jesus taught about the true happiness derived when one's heart, mind and actions conform to the will and image of a loving, suffering God. Only such believers truly know God. Wesley dared posit a heart bent toward others as the evidence of knowing God's love for oneself:

> True religion is right tempers towards God and man. It is, in two words, gratitude and benevolence; gratitude to our Creator and supreme Benefactor, and benevolence to our fellow-creatures. In other words, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. It is in consequence of our knowing God loves us that we love him, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Gratitude towards our Creator cannot but produce benevolence to our fellow-creatures. This is religion, and this is happiness; the happiness for which we were made. (353)

Hence, true religion, born out of a right heart filled with love for God and neighbor, activated by acts of kindness and gratitude, not only leads to a personal knowledge of God's love, but also to the experience of true happiness.

Whiteman's metaphor of the worldview as an iceberg meshes well with Wesley's paradigm of anthropology and soteriology. For Wesley, the kingdom of God is open to everyone. In his words, God's kingdom is the "sovereign right of all things that are or ever were created" (qtd. in Meistad 168). Wesley understood citizenship in the kingdom of God as characterized by a heart sanctified by Christ, extended upward toward God and outward toward neighbor. Having a right heart (a transformed worldview underneath the surface of consciousness) leads one to right beliefs (true religion at the surface of the water), and right actions (the works of piety and mercy appearing above the surface).

The Test of True Religion

In his article, anthropologist Andrew F. Walls draws a conclusion about the test of true religion. Walls notes two opposing tendencies inherent in the gospel. These tendencies, the "indigenizing principle" and the "pilgrim principle," create tension within Christianity (97-98). Christ calls people within the context of their historical-cultural environment. Therefore, they cannot separate from their social relationships. They indigenize—live both as a Christian and as a member of their society—to make their church feel like home. At the same time, Christians inherit the pilgrim principle, which makes them aware that they, like Christ, have "nowhere to lay [their] head" (Matt. 8:20). To be faithful to Christ means to be willing to follow Christ's leading, which often sets the Christian at odds with society (Walls 99).

Comment [ar4]: Correct

In his conclusion, Walls elaborates on the infant Judeo-Christian church's ongoing challenge to negotiate its indigenizing and pilgrim tendencies as it struggled to push across new cultural and ethnic boundaries. "Perhaps the real test of theological authenticity is the capacity to incorporate the history of Israel and God's people and to

treat it as one's own" (105).

The history of Israel and God's people, characterized by clashing cultures and expanding boundaries, is all about ushering in the kingdom of God. Hence, the theological framework for this study of the experiences of United Methodist ministers in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments is the kingdom of God. In fulfillment of the messianic prophecies of old, the Synoptic Gospels present Jesus as the long-awaited king of righteousness and peace. Jesus comes to inaugurate the reign of God and to establish his eternal kingdom on earth. A major feature and concern of the kingdom Jesus ushered in is the redefining of community membership "in a new, inclusive way" (Hanson 400).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Relatively few publications available deal specifically with the topic of cross-cultural-cross-racial or cross-cultural pastoral appointments. A number of publications are available on multicultural ministry and leadership. They offer helpful information particularly from the standpoint of ministers who have established their authority and influence in a congregation. Such ministers have either planted intentionally multicultural congregations or have established, through long and effective tenure, the level of respect and authority necessary to lead their congregation in embracing multicultural persons into the life of their congregations.

These dynamics, while similar, are far from being the same as those arising in established United Methodist churches, which theoretically will accept culturally and racially diverse members and pastors according to denominational polity but may or may not in actuality. Leading an old and established congregation into embracing racial and cultural diversity is much more difficult for a newly appointed pastor than it is for a founding pastor. On the other hand, tenured pastors who have already established their authority and influence are more likely to succeed in persuading their congregations to embrace racial or cultural diversity

The vast corpus of literature from which I have drawn includes lectures and writings of professors in the fields of anthropology, biblical theology, ethics of Christian community, and church leadership, as well as denominational profiles related to race, culture, and religion. I have also gleaned valuable insights from books and articles on Christian community and *koinonia*, multicultural congregations and leadership, and

Trinitarian theology. Books and articles on leadership, multiculturalism, and racial inclusion in secular occupations have added interesting dimensions of comparison, depth, and clarity to this study.

Two of the most helpful resources, however, have been *Meeting God at the Boundaries: Cross-Cultural-Cross-Cultural Clergy Appointments* by Lucia Ann McSpadden and *Embracing Diversity* by Charles R. Foster. McSpadden, an anthropologist and coordinator of international student support at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, was commissioned by the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to conduct a three-year study. As she explores efforts of the United Methodist Church to make the denomination's vision of authentic inclusiveness a reality through clergy appointments, McSpadden offers an objective analysis of the struggles and challenges accompanying cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Foster wrote *Embracing Diversity* expressly for two groups of leaders:
(1) pastors and lay leaders of racially and culturally diverse congregations, and
(2) pastors, lay leaders, denominational officers, and seminary students committed to equipping the congregations they serve for living hospitably in racial and cultural diversity. Foster explores the impact of cultural and racial diversity in U. S. and Canadian societies on the identity and mission of congregations. At the same time, he engages his readers in an examination of the dynamics of leadership in congregations embracing diversity and invites them to explore the dynamics of difference at work in the leadership of their own congregations.

Biblical Precedents

The biblical underpinnings for cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry find their origin in the book of beginnings: Genesis.

The Kingdom of God: Established at Creation, Modeled in the Trinity

In Genesis 1:1, the three co-eternal Persons of the One Trinitarian God, Elohim are at work, bringing all things into existence. In *Elohim*, God the Father is creating and designing life, God the Word (eternal Son) is speaking life, and God the Spirit is breathing and sustaining life. These three Persons work together as one—in perfect perichoretic harmony—to create the universe. The common roots of humans, Christians, and Methodists are located in the amazing Creation narrative. The seeds of the model for human-divine/human-human relationships are mirrored in the illustrious story of how *Elohim* creates and invites community. After *Elohim* says, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (1:27), he creates Adam and Eve. He blesses them and grants them dominion over his earth and all its creaturely inhabitants. God omits only one earthly species from this human entitlement to sovereignty over God's creation: other human beings. Forced domination of one human being by another was never a part of God's original plan for his kingdom.

God has an eternal reason for this omission. His original plan for the relationship of one human being with another is modeled after the harmonious interrelationship of the persons of the Trinity. Persons are not alone. They exist in webs of relationships. To speak of an "individual person" is to create a conspicuous tension with the concept of the interconnected "Persons" in the web of the Trinity. Each of the three Persons of the Godhead dispenses a distinct role, yet, each Person is incomplete without the other.

Together they are one God, being of one ontological nature, substance, power, and eternity.

In a similar manner, God created human *persons* to exist in webs of relationships. Humans are conceptions of mothers and fathers. As parents exist to care for one another and for their children, their children, in turn, do likewise for their spouses and children. Within that same web, children respond to their parents, with reciprocations and reversals of certain roles occurring at various points in life. This web of interrelatedness and interconnection branches out to connect with other webs—with extended family members, friends, classmates, coworkers, church members, service providers, educators—and the list goes on. When a human being touches *one* person, he or she touches *another*.

For global twenty-first century persons, the web of potential relationships is virtually boundless. Still, the ultimate *Person* in all these relationships is Jesus Christ—God the Son. In the Gospel of John, the divine nature of Jesus within the perichoretic relationship of the Godhead is highlighted most succinctly. Jesus is the divine Word of God who was with God in Creation, speaking all things into existence (John 1:1). According to Dennis F. Kinlaw, Jesus is one-third of the reason the Hebrew noun for God, *Elohim,* is plural in Genesis chapter one, while the verb for said, *wayyo'mer,* is singular. Although Christ is one with the Father ontologically, he is distinct enough from the Father that he was able to become incarnate in human flesh. Jesus is the one whom Gods sends into the world to save humankind from their sins. He responds to the Father with obedience. The truest expression of personhood is found in Christ. Christians become one with God by identifying with Jesus Christ the Son, and through obeying his

call to go forth into the world to carry out His mission (23).

Oneness with God: The Church's Mission in Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Ministry

Oneness with God in accomplishing the mission of the gospel has broad biblical-theological implications for cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. Through Christ, the goal of the triune God for the healing and salvation of all humankind becomes the Christian's goal. The Church's unifying mission and purpose, the tie binding all together as one, is expressed by Jesus Christ in John 17:21. As he intercedes on behalf of all his followers, he explains his reason: "that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that You sent Me." People of the kingdom take on God's image, likeness, and inheritance. Therefore, God the Father now sends forth his earthly children into the ministry of Jesus Christ the Son, empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit.

Whereas likeness to the Triune God (*imago Dei*) provides a divine model for holy, other-oriented social interactions, oneness with God, imputed through identification as followers of Jesus Christ, offers believers the right to participate in that harmonious divine relationship. As humans demonstrate unity and singleness of purpose with God and with one another, they present Christ Incarnate to the world. Christ incarnate through Christians is the critical basis of effective witness and evangelism.

The Kingdom of God: Conveyed by Grace to Israel

The humble origin of the biblical notion of community finds germination during the reign of Ramesses II (ca. 1290-1224 BC). During this time, God delivers his chosen people, Israel, out of bondage in Egypt into freedom in the Promised Land (Gen. 12-39; Exod. 1-15). An astounding realization can be gleaned from this experience that has

ramifications for cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry today, namely, that unity is not determined or shaped by accomplished leaders. Neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, nor any other leader can take credit for the unity of ancient Israel. Those whom God calls to lead Israel have neither absolute freedom nor control over their own destiny. Still, God calls them forth to lead themselves and a multitude of others into a life of blessing. As they move forth in direct obedience to the will and direction of God, God is faithful to keep his covenant with them.

Through this experience, Israel learns its unity is rooted solely in the loving initiative of a gracious God—a God who raises up persons of no status as leaders. The Song of Miriam (Exod. 15:13) attests to God's grace: "Thou hast led in thy steadfast love the people whom thou hast redeemed; thou hast guided them by thy strength to thy holy abode." Nevertheless, Yahweh does not stop with redemption; he continues to cover Israel with his sustaining presence throughout the difficult period of wilderness wanderings and beyond. In so doing, he reveals the *hesed* nature of his character—his goodness, kindness, mercy, compassion. This love demonstrates divine faithfulness and trustworthiness in keeping the covenant. This kind of love sets the norm for all of Israel's relationships.

With Yahweh as their ultimate and faithful leader, the people of Israel commit themselves to an egalitarian communal relationship with an unprecedented emphasis on equality and inclusiveness. From their example in Yahweh, they infer characteristics of righteousness. In the same way Yahweh acted to establish freedom and justice on behalf of an oppressed, lowly people, so Israel determines to be a righteous community toward those who find themselves in similar conditions. They acknowledge how God has

reached out to them when they had no special claim on God's attention. As a result, the ancient Israelites avert the human predisposition to privilege themselves as the in-group, while dismissing outsiders as unworthy of their concern. In the same way God delivered them from the exclusion and dehumanization of the Egyptian social system, so Israel was to take responsibility for the vulnerable and dispossessed in its midst (Hanson 469-71).

The Kingdom of God: Racial Parity Signified in Jesus' Ancestry

Matthew lists four non-Hebrew women in the genealogy of Jesus: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. Such mention by Matthew emphasizes how God accorded honor as his people to these representatives of the Gentile nations. According to Genesis 38:6-30 and 1 Chronicles 2:3-4, Tamar was likely a Canaanite. Tamar conceived twin sons by her father-in-law, Judah, the son of Jacob. Ruth was a Moabite. Rahab was a Gentile prostitute from Jericho who hid the Israelite spies from the King of Jericho. Her deed brought her acceptance into nation of Israel through the tribe of Judah. According to the derivation of her name, Bathsheba was likely a Canaanite or Hittite.

Each of these four women represents a nation eventually united with Israel through Christ the Messiah. Each also points to an omniscient, sovereign God who has the power to transcend and transform human conditions and situations. In his origin, baptism, and temptation, God the Son identifies completely yet transcendentally with sinful humanity. Ultimately, the reference to these four women prepares Matthew's readers for Jesus's irregular, miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit.

The multiethnic and multicultural saga of Jesus continues with regard to the locations listed in his birth narratives. Bethlehem, Egypt, and Nazareth served to protect the young Messiah and his refugee parents during the first two years of his life.

Matthew's telling of the birth narrative lays the framework for the Messiah's eventual mission to all nations. Most remarkable is Egypt's transformation from a symbol of Israel's oppression and bondage in Moses' day to a haven of protection for Israel's Messiah.

The Kingdom of God: The Church's Mission to the Gentiles

The four foreign women of the geneology proved God could graft any human being into Abraham's family through a lowly human, yet John the Baptist came along, declaring to Israel that physical bloodlines were as irrelevant as stones to life in the kingdom of God. Oscar Cullman argues that Jesus was baptized in view of his death, which brings about forgiveness of sins for all people. Therefore, Jesus must unite in solidarity with his whole people and go down to Jordan for the fulfillment of all righteousness (LaGrand 182). Jesus' baptism is the beginning of the fulfillment. It is the inaugural symbol of his gospel, kingdom, and suffering. Jesus' forty days of temptation in the wilderness (recapitulating Israel's forty years in the wilderness) end with a third temptation particularly relating to the nations. The devil offers him "all the kingdoms of the world" (Luke 4:18) in exchange for paying homage to Rome. This offer was a strong temptation in Jesus' day. Particularly significant is how this temptation relates subtly to God's commands to Israel regarding the nations in Deuteronomy 6-8. In addition to freedom from the nations, the devil promises dominion over them.

Comment [ar5]: Corrected

In Matthew's gospel, a Roman centurion and a Canaanite woman represent the Gentile nations in their pleas for Jesus to heal their loved ones. James LaGrand affirms Joachim Jeremias in his judgment that Jesus' response to the Canaanite woman and the Roman centurion are "exceptions that prove the rule" (210). In responding to the faith of

Gentiles, Jesus shows acceptance of the revelation of what is now God's will for his ministry.

The Kingdom of God: Concretized in Jesus' Call to Community

Jesus was strongly concerned with community. Narratives about Jesus abound with one-on-one encounters with individuals. Of course, he valued individuals. He exhorted each one to exercise free will in deciding to live for and in the eternal kingdom of God, yet Jesus was concerned with his people as a collective whole. Confusion often arises in consideration of the ramifications of Jesus' ministry to Israel regarding the appropriateness of ethnic and cultural exclusivism in congregations today. Some today, particularly church growth experts, feel Jesus' initial ministry, focused as it was on Israel, is a model for congregational ministry to targeted homogeneous populations. Nevertheless, Gerhard Lohfink and others point out Jesus' eschatological intention regarding Israel was to gather and restore the people of God. In other words, Jesus did not come to establish a new religious community. He came to announce the time had been fulfilled when the promises of the ancient prophets would come to pass, and God's kingdom would be established.

Within this scenario, Israel had to be regathered for the reign of God. Unfortunately, the majority of Israel, including most of the highest-ranking religious officials of Yahweh, rejected Jesus' call. LaGrand notes that the scribes and Pharisees attempted to proselytize out of the wrong basic intent and purpose. They had failed in their God-given mission: to direct the scattered sheep of Israel in following God's will. When Jesus arrived on the scene, the official leaders of Judaism were voyaging from city to city, spreading propaganda about one idea or another. Having failed in their original

mission, they were now exporting their failure (149-50). In calling the twelve disciples, Jesus was symbolically representing the whole nation of Israel. The disciples were imperfect—far from being the holy remnant of God's chosen people. Jesus chose them to anticipate the future, eschatological reality of what the fully gathered Israel would be some day.

Instead of debunking the concept of universal salvation, the gathering of the twelve disciples actually promoted it. Jesus saw Israel as not having been chosen for Israel's own sake but as a sign of universal salvation for all nations. God would not usher in his reign by one miraculous act; rather, God decided his kingdom should be mediated historically through the shining example of one concrete people—Israel.

Those disciples whom Jesus chose to represent Israel had different social relationships than could be found in the society of Israel. No systems of retribution and no structures of domination existed among the twelve. Jesus did not direct his ethic of community toward isolated individual Israelites. Through him, God chose to begin his kingdom in one elect people. Nevertheless, this group—the nation of Israel—failed to respond, so God began with an even smaller representative group (Lohfink 70-72).

In Romans 11:11, Paul clearly identifies Israel's stumbling as the means through which God redeems the nations: "Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious." In verses 20-21, he further depicts Israel's failure as a permanent warning to the Christian church against unbelief and arrogance: "But they were broken off because of their unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either."

God did not preempt Israel's future role in salvation history and/or cease to love Israel because of Israel's earlier failure, Paul declares. To the contrary, he warns the Gentiles that Israel's election still stands, and God still loves her because of the patriarchs:

> Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. (vv. 30-31)

Today, as in the time of ancient Israel, God continues to extend his love and grace to those who fail to reach out in an attitude of genuine Christian love and reconciliation.

The Kingdom of God: Radicalized in the Necessity to Choose a New Family

Jesus made radical demands on the disciples who followed him. He required the twelve to forsake their families. According to the customs of the ancient Middle East, their husbands' abandonment would lead the disciples' wives to the cultural shame of returning with their children to their parents' homes. Although the demands Jesus made on his twelve disciples had radical and serious implications for them and their families, these demands were no more severe than those Jesus made of others in the kingdom who stayed at home. The Sermon on the Mount is replete with strong requirements and pronouncements, such as the indictment of adultery conferred upon the man who glances at a woman lustfully. Lohfink notes that for the sake of the kingdom of God, Jesus himself never married (39; Matt. 19:12).

The call to follow Jesus in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry is a radical demand to unwavering seriousness and commitment. It is not a hierarchical call, extended to a better-than-average person, yet it is a demanding call to leave the familiarity of one's old family—one's race, culture, many of one's biological family ties, one's ethnocentrism, one's land—and to locate one's identity within the new family comprised by the entire

people of God. In Mark 10:29-30, Jesus issues a sobering call that is filled with promise:

> Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.

Those who enter into the new family of God's kingdom take upon themselves the ethic of Christ. In comparison with the burdensome yoke of the Torah, the demands of entering into the new family of the kingdom with Christ are light. Jesus' demands are, indeed, radical. At the same time, he is gentle and humble of heart. He does not seek to dominate and overpower his followers but becomes the servant of all.

Pastors and congregations that engage in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry are taking upon themselves the burden of Jesus. In order to do so, they must take upon themselves the burdens of one another. Pastors, in particular, often find themselves isolated from intimate relationships with clergy on either side—minority and majority. Usually, only other ministers similarly appointed can fully understand the sacrifices accompanying cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry; nevertheless, these pastors can find consolation, encouragement, and ease from their burdens as they take upon themselves Jesus' burden and learn to emulate his ways.

The Kingdom of God: Necessitated by Jesus' Model of Servanthood

Cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry requires a servant's attitude best illustrated by Jesus in John 13:1-17. Jesus, "knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God" (v. 3), rose from the table of the Passover Feast. He removed his garments, tied a towel around his waist, poured water into a basin, and went around washing his disciples' feet. When he had finished, he

dressed himself and sat back down, asking the twelve followers, “Do you know what I have done to you?” (v. 12b). He proceeds to explain that as the disciples’ Lord and teacher, he is setting an example for them to follow. “Most assuredly I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them” (vv. 16-17).

Washing feet requires stooping down. It means self-effacement and self-sacrifice. In stooping down to wash the feet of his disciples, Jesus was demonstrating the measures of totally other-directed selfless love necessary for eliciting the promises of forgiveness and reconciliation that ultimately lead to the salvation of humankind. Significant is the fact that Judas Iscariot, the one who would betray Jesus into the hands of the religious authorities and ultimate crucifixion, was among the twelve. Jesus knew Judas would betray him, yet he included Judas in this humble act of compassion and love.

Jesus willingly carried out this task of servanthood as a necessary example. He knew he had come from God and was going back to live with God eternally. As he prepared to invite his disciples to a life of servant ministry, he did so knowing that in their obedience to the mission of the Father, they too would minister out of the same conviction. Having done so, they also would reign with God in his eternal kingdom.

Every person who chooses to follow Christ receives his invitation to servant ministry. Those who would live into his identity are called to stoop down, as Jesus did, and wash the feet of people from every walk of life. In this posture of humility, all receive the call to cross over racial and cultural boundaries.

Christian leaders must remind congregations refusing to support and receive ministry from a godly and capable pastor of a different race or culture of all that is at

stake. Congregations must recall the sobriety of the words Jesus spoke to his disciples after he had washed their feet: “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me” (Matt. 10:40). Clergy and denominational officials must lead congregations into realizing that by rejecting a servant of God based on race or culture, they are not only rejecting that person but also the Christ whom that person has been called to represent and the wise heavenly Father who saw fit to send that person into their midst.

If the ministry of Christians is the same as Christ’s ministry, it must be extended to all those to whom Christ extended himself. With Christ, no one is too different—too superior or inferior, too intelligent or unintelligent, too refined or crude, too honorable or dishonorable, too respectable or disreputable—to be denied a seat with him at his communion table.

Some may argue the twelve disciples who partook of the Last Supper with Christ were an exclusive group of handpicked males. However, these twelve men represented a much greater phenomenon. The nation of Israel was chosen as a sign of universal salvation for all nations. Through the history of Israel, his one living people, God would mediate his reign on earth. The rule of God could only come into the world when it was accepted. The people of Israel gave concrete evidence of that acceptance as they brought light to the social aspects of God’s sovereignty through their own social relationships.

The Kingdom of God: Inner Righteousness and Unconditional Love

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus exhorts his disciples to aspire to their calling to a righteousness exceeding the outward righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 5:20). Such outward righteousness consists of following the right rules and doing

the right things with wrong, self-serving motives. The penalty for settling for outward righteousness is denial of entry into the kingdom of heaven.

Christ calls his church to a righteousness of the heart aligning with God's heart through submission to the Spirit and will of the Lord Jesus Christ. This righteousness is the kind to which John Wesley alluded when he spoke of "holiness of heart"—*orthokardia.* Jesus calls his people to the superlative of love flowing from a heart that is centered within his heart: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Matt. 5:44). The willingness to yield to and engage this kind of unreciprocated love establishes one's identity as a child of God. When, from the overflow of the heart, Christians demonstrate such love towards those who have not yet learned how to love them in return, Jesus says believers become "sons of your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:45).

The Kingdom of God: Empowered by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost

The first two chapters of Acts record the history and basis of the disciples' empowerment for achieving oneness with Christ. Their identity is sealed as the diverse yet unified body of Christ. They receive the power to witness with vitality to the gospel as they perform Christ's mission as his universal Church throughout the world.

Ten days after Christ's ascension, his disciples were gathered in an upstairs room in Jerusalem. This group included, but was not limited to, Jesus's original eleven disciples, the women who had accompanied them (see Luke 23:49, 55), Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. They all joined together constantly in prayer. No longer did they have the human Jesus to teach and guide them. The charge to implement Jesus's

kingdom vision of a house of prayer for all the nations was upon them.

The answer to their prayers came on that tenth day, the Day of Pentecost. Amazingly, the power of the Holy Spirit fell upon them as they prayed in that upper room, even as it had fallen upon Jesus the day John baptized him in the Jordan River. The vitality of his Holy Spirit's empowerment propelled them out into the streets of Jerusalem. There they proclaimed the good news of Jesus Christ in the language of the nations. Jews from every nation who had relocated to Jerusalem gathered, awed and inquisitive as to the nature of this strange phenomenon (Acts 2:5). Each of these diverse groups of Jews—Jews from Parthia, Medes, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappodocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamhylia, Egypt, Libya near Cyrene, Rome, Crete, and Arabia—expressed utter amazement as they miraculously heard these native Galileans preaching the gospel to them in their own native languages and dialects. Through the mouths of these Galileans, the Spirit of Jesus Christ spoke supernaturally to them in the language understood by all who would unite together as the house of prayer for all nations. After Peter preached to them, offering to each salvation, forgiveness, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, three thousand multicultural, multilingual Jews joined together with the Jerusalem congregation of Christ's followers (Acts 2:41). From the day of its inception, the Church of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, was multicultural, multinational, and multilingual.

The Kingdom of God: Exemplified in the Church at Antioch

The church of Antioch in Syria, formed during the 30s, was the first congregation to experience the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles into one coherent faith community (Acts 11:19-27). With a population of nearly 500,000, Antioch was the third largest city

in the Roman Empire. The city boasted a widely diverse cultural mix, including peoples from Syria, Rome, Greece, Arabia, Persia, Armenia, Parthia, Cappodocia, and Jerusalem. Jews comprised one-seventh of Antioch's urban population. During the late 30s and early 40s, ethnic tensions erupted between the Jews and the majority Greco-Syrians. Jews suffered violent mob attacks and the torching of their synagogues.

Greek-speaking Jewish Christians, seeking asylum from persecution in Jerusalem, began to arrive in Antioch in the mid-30s. Joined by their Cyrenean and Cypriot brothers, who preached to the Greeks, they began preaching to the Jews at Antioch (Acts 11:19-20). Thus, the first congregation of Jesus Christ including both Jews and Gentiles came to life in Antioch. Significant for the kingdom of God, this first multiracial church was where Jesus' disciples were first called "Christians."

Several aspects of the congregation at Antioch are particularly relevant to this study. Early on, the Antioch congregation selected not simply a Jewish but a diverse leadership team. Raised outside Palestine, Paul and Barnabas were accustomed to Jewish tradition yet immersed in Greek culture. Both spoke Aramaic and Greek. Paul was a student of the renowned Jewish scholar Gamaliel, and had a rich religious and classical education. Manaen had grown up in the household where Herod Antipas was his stepbrother. Lucius of Cyrene came from North Africa. He may have been one of the initial preachers in Antioch. Simeon, called Niger (black), was apparently a black African.

Emulating the social practices of Jesus, the Antioch church lived as an inclusive fellowship. Unity in diversity was truly the norm here, as Jews and Gentiles continued to embrace their culture of origin but gave up certain cultural rules preventing them from

living together as one in Christ. They ate and socialized together. Doing so automatically necessitated Jewish Christians give up their traditional understanding that their ethnic identity required them to live separately from Gentiles. In order to fulfill the mandates of Christ's gospel and kingdom in Antioch, the Jews had to move out of their comfortable ethnocentric space and to risk being seen as closely associating with pagans. Ironically, Christianity appeared in Antioch just in time to offer a basis for social solidarity amid the city's extreme ethnic tensions.

Then, as today, Antioch society tried to categorize and label people as a collective group. Nevertheless, no ethnic or cultural tag fit this unusual group. They could be called neither pagans nor Jews but were united by a fellowship and mutual identity that transcended the norms for association and behavior in the empire. For this reason, the mixed group in the church at Antioch were called "Christians" or "Christ followers" (Acts 11:26).

Theological Precedents

When Jesus introduced the kingdom of God, he proclaimed God's rule and reign over all of life. In such a kingdom, individuality-in-community and sharing are seen as far more sacred than individualism.

Unity in the Diversity of God's Kingdom

When I think of the church's response to cross-cultural-cross-racial and multicultural ministry, I am reminded of a story shared by Gene Edward Veith, Jr. Veith says Charles "Chuck" Colson had dinner once with a media personality. He tried to get him to talk about Christianity but met resistance. Colson gave his own testimony about coming to Christ. Then, he raised the issues of death, life after death, and heaven and

hell. Colson soon realized he was getting nowhere. The friend said he was not concerned about dying, and he did not believe in life after death, heaven, or hell.

Colson proceeded to mention the Woody Allen movie *Crimes and Killers* about a serial killer who justifies his murders by surmising that life, after all, is about survival of the fittest. With this story, Colson finally got the friend's reflective attention. Colson moved from discussion about the movie to similar themes in stories by C. S. Lewis and Tolstoy. Having kept the man's rapt attention, Colson moved ahead to discussion of Paul's epistle to the Romans. He pointed out humanity's inability to keep the law of God. Finally, Colson reached the crescendo of his discussion, speaking of Christ's atoning work on the cross (Veith 15).

Colson did not bring his friend to Christian conversion that night. Still, he left knowing he had penetrated the hard shell of resistance that kept his friend from hearing the message of the gospel. At this point, Colson laments about how resistant the modern mind has become against Christ's message (Veith 15-16).

I could not agree more. In the history of my arrivals to assume pastoral duties in three cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations, I have experienced the gamut of individual receptions—from enthusiastic embrace to staid resistance. I am always overjoyed at the number of Christians who look forward to the exploration of new kingdom boundaries in ministry. Some of the most Christ-filled experiences of my Christian journey have occurred within the context of cross-racial-cross-cultural ministry.

On the other hand, I never cease to be surprised at how casually some Christians appear to dismiss Christ's command to "love your neighbor" as it relates to neighbors of a different culture or race. These Christians wholeheartedly embrace the concept of a

racially and culturally exclusive Christian community as if human exclusion is totally consistent with Christianity.

Diversity in the Kingdom of the Early Church

Robert Banks points out how Christianity began in a Greco-Roman world divided along the lines of nationality, freedom, social status, and gender (109-10). Within the context of such great diversity, the lines of distinction gradually became blurred. Banks' description of the diversity of ancient Christian society finds many parallels with the diversity of America today. Banks hits upon a key distinction about Paul's thinking that allows him to encourage the early Church along the lines of unity rather than exclusivity:

> Paul's thinking *does not begin* [emphasis mine] with the differences that divide people from one another *but* [emphasis mine] with *the differences that divide all people from God* [emphasis mine]. He describes the Christian community as uniting all (irrespective of nationality, social position, or gender) who acknowledge the death and resurrection of Christ. (110)

Although the Bible is clear about who Christian neighbors are and the responsibility to love and accept them, the ease with which some Christians today resist doing so carries certain implications. Such resistance seems to indicate they do not perceive the Bible's depiction of a universal kingdom of God—in which all members are equally participatory and valued. (Veith 15-16).

Nevertheless, the kingdom of God is the principal, overarching theme undergirding all authentic Christian ministry. The reality of the coming kingdom was the present hope of the pre-church people of God in the Old Testament, the Israelites. In the midst of national decline and exile, God spoke words of hope and expectation through the prophets. God announced the time when God would manifest himself self as king through the prophet Isaiah (40:10 ff.). Heralded in a climactic, unprecedented fashion, the

Sovereign Lord would enter his kingdom with power, and his arm of righteousness would rule for him.

The declaration of the kingdom's arrival is an important theme found near the beginning of the Gospels. The New Testament employs the terms "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" interchangeably. Matthew particularly speaks of the kingdom of heaven. In his announcement of the kingdom, Jesus vocalizes the realization of Israel's hope and the fulfillment of the covenant made to the patriarchs. The kingdom of Jesus has temporal patterns. In the distant future, faithful believers, Jews and Gentiles**,** will gather for the eschatological kingdom banquet. Through unbelief and disobedience and not by their race, class or culture some humans will exclude themselves from that banquet. They will be judged to the darkness of destruction where "[t]here will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:11, 12; 13:39-42, 49-50). The kingdom inherited by the sheep appears simultaneously with the destruction of the goats and follows the coming of the Son of Man and the angels for final judgment (Matt. 25:31-34, 41). However, says Jesus, some will not taste death before seeing the kingdom of God, which lies in the immediate future (Luke 9:27; Matt. 4:17, 16:28; Mark 1:15, 9:1). The kingdom referred to here is the kingdom soon to be ushered in through the death and exaltation of Jesus, which includes Pentecost.

Jesus also makes the striking proclamation that the kingdom is present. His disciples are blessed; they have been granted an experiential knowledge of the "secrets of the kingdom" as a present reality (Matt. 13:11, 16-17). In this respect, the least one in the kingdom is greater than John the Baptist (Matt. 11:11-13). Of significant import is the healing of the demon-possessed man (Matt. 12:22-28). This event represents the coming

of the ruling power of the kingdom of God (v. 26), which overcomes Satan's kingdom power. In this passage, a mission of deliverance and redemption characterizes the kingdom. This mission directly opposes the rule of Satan. It is enabled by the eschatological power of the Holy Spirit, which is the dynamic of the kingdom.

The Drama of Antithetical Kingdom Forces

Cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry highlights the presence of strong, antithetical kingdom forces. Where cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry exists, it evokes a clashing of two kingdoms. Satan's kingdom, with its individualism, ethnocentrism, and division, collides head-on with the *koinonia*, human equality, and unity of the kingdom of God.

The kingdom and its coming are messianic, formed by critical aspects of Christ's vital mission. Christ is the kingdom in person. With Christ's coming, his kingdom arrives in three successive stages, each distinguished by a unique aspect of Christ's work. They are (1) the period of Jesus's earthly ministry, (2) the period from his exaltation to his return (the time of the Church), and (3) the period beyond his return (the *eschaton).*

Whereas Jesus preached the kingdom, the apostles preached Jesus as the Christ. Hence, the apostolic proclamation of Paul and others explains the eschatological reality of the kingdom about which Christ taught and preached. The apostles' teaching focuses on the climactic kingdom events of Christ's death and resurrection (e.g., Acts 2:14-36; 17:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; 1 Pet. 1:10-12). Nevertheless, the Apostles also incorporate the following central themes of Christ's ministry flowing out of these events: reconciliation, righteousness, and the Holy Spirit.

Paul emphasizes the corporate responsibility of those who live in the kingdom of God to care for one another. Constantly, he reminds each member of the Christian

community to share responsibility for the whole: “Christians bear one another’s burdens” (Gal. 6:2). They are mutually responsible for disciplining members of the community who offend other believers. Christians provide guidance, encourage one another to continued Christian commitment, and exercise gifts of knowledge, revelation, wisdom, and instruction, promoting the future development of the Christian community. Every member of the kingdom of God has some measure of responsibility for the ongoing corporate work and leadership of the kingdom. One of the few distinctions Paul makes among members of the kingdom concerns the individual’s level of Christian maturity. The strong, more mature Christians are to assist those who are weak, less mature, and more inconsistent in Christian intellectual and moral growth to mature spiritually.

Because cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry involves crossing traditional racial and cultural boundaries, looking at how Paul and the early Church handled such interactions is profitable. The majority of the persons who worked with Paul were Jewish converts to Christianity. Some forty persons are named in the Scriptures as probable patrons of Paul, and only one or two (including Crispus, Acts 18:8) are Jewish Christians. Paul’s company in evangelizing the Gentiles included Barnabas and Mark, Jews from Cyprus (Acts 4:36; Col. 4:10), and later Silas, from the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15:22, 40). Along with Silas, Paul recruits Timothy. Timothy’s father is Greek, although his Jewish mother raised him in the Jewish religious tradition. Aquila (from Pontus) and Priscilla (from Pontus or Rome) join him at Corinth (18:1-2). On Paul’s third missionary journey, Erastus, a full Gentile and city treasurer from Corinth, joins him. Lucius, Jason, Sosipater (Rom. 16:21), and probably Sosthenes and Jesus Justus (1 Cor. 1:1) were among Paul’s Jewish coworkers. Later mentions of a Gaius and Aristarchus (Acts 19:29);

Sopater, Secundus, Tychicus, another Gaius, and Trophimus (20:4) reflect names of persons for which ethnic origin is not easy to trace. Others whose names Paul mentions in his letters also have obscure racial origins. A note in his letter to the Colossians shows that the Jewish Christian membership in his mission had diminished to three persons: Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus Justus. The three persons most consistently active throughout Paul's work comprised a cross-cultural-cross-racial group: Silas (a Jew), Timothy (a half-Jew and half-Greek), and Titus, a Greek (Banks 152).

Clearly, Paul was stretching the boundaries of racial and cultural tradition by pulling Jews and Gentiles together into the kingdom within the context of Christian religion. Greco-Roman history depicts daily cross-cultural-cross-racial interactions between Jews and Gentiles in secular society, as is similar to the normative cross-cultural-cross-racial interactions that occur in secular American society today. Nevertheless, Banks notes, "[T]here does not seem to be any real precedent for their collaborating to propagate religious ideas" (155).

Also noteworthy is Paul's treatment of slaves and women. Interestingly, Paul values Onesimus, the runaway slave mentioned in Philemon, as a fellow citizen in the kingdom. Although Paul eventually returns Onesimus to Philemon (his owner), Paul clearly intimates he would appreciate having Onesimus assist him should Philemon be inclined to set him free. Banks observes that the Scriptures record no mention of Paul either owning or obtaining slaves during his missionary enterprise. A person with Paul's family background and Roman citizenship, notes Banks, generally owned slaves. Throughout his letters (particularly Romans and 1 Corinthians) and the book of Acts, Paul names and acknowledges women (i.e., Priscilla, Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa,

Phoebe, Euodia, Syntyche, and Junias) as his coworkers in mission and fellow laborers in the kingdom.

The Failure of Traditional Theology

In his article, R. B. Gaffin, Jr. notes how traditional theology failed to grasp the eschatological presence of the kingdom Jesus heralded (369). Traditional theology distinguishes two kingdoms: one manifested through the Church and the present spread of the gospel and a second, entirely futuristic, eschatological kingdom, associated with Christ's return. Neo-Kantian liberal theology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries viewed the kingdom of God as an ideal moral order. Nevertheless, a history-of-religions school emerged around the turn of the twentieth century that understood the message of Jesus against the backdrop of Judaic eschatological expectations. Specifically, Jesus designated himself as the Messiah as he proclaimed the coming end of the world and arrival of the kingdom, entrenched in violent, apocalyptic upheaval.

The view known as consistent eschatology involves an exclusive, futuristic kingdom proclamation that eliminates references to the present. Gaffin cites C. H. Dodd's reaction to consistent theology, realized eschatology, as having an opposite one-sided emphasis on the present elements of the kingdom (369).

By the 1950s, critical scholarship reached the consensus that Jesus' kingdom is an eschatological reality involving both the present and future, the already and not yet (Gaffin 367-69).

The Kingdom Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer

United Methodist congregations today are faced with Christ's mandate (Matt. 28:19-20) to evangelize the sprawling global community residing along the sidewalks

and lawns of American neighborhoods. This responsibility presses the Church far beyond the comparatively easy, more theoretical ecclesial tasks of a half century ago. Local church congregations can learn much about kingdom living from a study of the writings of German theologian Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer's theology offers great insight in terms of the responsibility of the individual Christian for life in the kingdom.

Bonhoeffer spent a major portion of his life proclaiming to Christians the high cost to be paid for Christian living. He understood God's grace as costly because it compels humans to submit to Christ's yoke and follow him. In his book *Life Together,* Bonhoeffer speaks candidly about how living the Christian life takes the believer outside the comfortable realm of those liked and enjoyed. In order to live together in the kingdom, Christians, like Jesus, must acclimate themselves to being brought into proximity with those who make them feel the most ill at ease:

> A Christian fellowship lives and exists by the intercession of its members for one another, or it collapses. I can no longer condemn or hate a brother for whom I pray, no matter how much trouble he causes me. His face, that hitherto may have been strange and intolerable to me, is transformed in intercession into the countenance of a brother for whom Christ died, the face of a forgiven sinner. (86)

Jesus, the major exemplar, found himself alienated from others during many critical moments of his ministry on earth. He lived among enemies. Near the end of his life, his own disciples deserted him. He died on the cross utterly alone—isolated from those who had promised to follow him to the end. Jesus knew he had come to earth to bring peace to God's enemies.

Bonhoeffer's theology bears relevantly upon my experience and those of others who minister cross-culturally-cross-racially. Although pastors are constantly surrounded with people, few understand and can support them in the struggles and triumphs unique

to cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. All too well, such pastors know the meaning of Bonhoeffer's words: "Alone you stood before God when he called you; alone you had to answer that call; alone you had to struggle and pray; and alone you will die and give an account to God" (*Life Together* 77).

For me and many other minorities who cross the borders into the majority religious culture, a powerful sense of God's call to "life together" in the kingdom is the constant sustaining power. When much around us is uncomfortable, shifting, and draining, God's call remains constant and certain, and God's faithfulness reassuring. For minorities, and particularly for female minorities, the power automatically accorded to white males is generally absent. In addition to the usual demands of ministry, minority ministers in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry are saddled with the burdensome task of proving their competency, credibility, and spiritual authority to lead members of the dominant culture. At the same time, they are likely to feel somewhat isolated from both majority and minority culture clergy peers. Like Jesus, minority clergy ministering in the dominant cultural context know their mission is to take up the cross and follow Jesus daily. They realize the greater purpose for their existence is to help bring peace, love, unity, and reconciliation into the kingdom of God. Precisely because the sacrifice required in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry is so great, each small triumph is magnified exponentially in comparison with similar successes achieved in a mono-racial setting. When each step of progress requires the exertion of multiplied effort, the resulting rewards for the kingdom are so compelling one cannot help but propel oneself toward the next challenge.

Resounding the sentiments of Martin Luther, Bonhoeffer admonishes Christians

against living a secluded life, cloistered off in a community of like-minded cronies. Ironically, most Christians today would not consider sequestering themselves off in a monastery or convent as did the ancient desert ascetics. Nevertheless, many contemporary Christians do not give a second thought to the kind of isolation they practice in seeking to maintain exclusive, mono-ethnic congregations. Quoting Luther, Bonhoeffer calls those of the kingdom to the task of Christ:

> The Kingdom of Christ is to be in the midst of your enemies. And he who will not suffer this does not want to be of the Kingdom of Christ; he wants to be among friends, to sit among roses and lilies, not with the bad people but the devout people. O you blasphemers and betrayers of Christ! If Christ had done what you are doing who would ever have been spared? (*Life Together* 17-18)

The world is rapidly changing from national to global. Each day presents a new opportunity to open one's heart to a radical exploration of the kingdom.

Bonhoeffer's Experience of the Kingdom of God in America

Bonhoeffer would agree with religion professor and scholar Marcus Borg that syncretism with secular individualism has crippled American Christianity. During his American studies at Union Theological Seminary in 1930-31, Bonhoeffer became disillusioned with American theology. He believed the radical socializing of Christianity and the secularization of Christian philosophy and organization had rendered American theology innocuous. Exceptions to this negative view were the action-oriented theologies of Reinhold Niebuhr and Eugene Lyman, which espoused an essential unity between thought and life and between ideas and decisions (Gruchy10-11).

While living in New York City, Bonhoeffer practiced his communal theology by moving outside the comfortable realm of those he already liked and enjoyed being around. He consciously moved out to embrace "the least of these" in the kingdom. He

taught Sunday school at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in the ghetto of Harlem. At Abyssinian, the vibrant faith and spirituality of black Christians deeply impressed Bonhoeffer (Gruchy 11). Introduced to Abyssinian by Frank Fisher, an African-American student, Bonhoeffer witnessed the church's passionate commitment to human, social, and racial justice. The congregation's joy and Christian spirituality deeply inspired him (Gushee 2).

Bonhoeffer's Harlem experience gave him a new perspective from which to view the growing racism within his own nation: the activation of Christian commitment to social and racial justice. Another friend, French pacifist Jean Lassere, helped Bonhoeffer see the Sermon on the Mount as the charter for Christian discipleship. He convinced Bonhoeffer that it should be a fundamental commitment for the transnational Christian body to become involved in international peacemaking. Bonhoeffer's experiences in Spain and New York had given him a broader perspective on the German church and nation (Gruchy 11-12; Gentz 150).

Bonhoeffer: The Kingdom versus Acculturated Christianity

David P. Gushee observes, "These Christ-centered commitments both to social and racial justice for 'the least of these' and to international peace placed Bonhoeffer in opposition to the acculturated Germanic Christianity of his own time" (2). I would speculate this same "acculturated" brand of American Christianity often hinders cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. Such a culturally shaped religious belief system, by its nature, opposes most individuals and institutions who take a similar stance to embrace the kingdom of God and to uphold its concomitant call to social unity and racial justice.

In 1933, the Aryan clause of Hitler's Law for the Restoration of Civil Service was

passed, requiring that all pastors of Jewish background be expelled from offices held in the Evangelical Church in Germany. Bonhoeffer proposed three actions of the Evangelical Church toward the State: (1) to remind the state of its responsibility, (2) to aid the victims of the state's action, and (3) to confess its faith anew against any serious threat to the integrity of its message. Some German pastors resented Bonhoeffer's talk, feeling that he was too radical, political, and sympathetic with the Jews (Gruchy 19).

Through a series of cleverly planted ecclesial appointments, Hitler effectively intimidated the German pastors. He also diluted the allegiance of the German church leaders by allowing Evangelical pastors the option of preaching without state interference as long as they accepted official church committees and stayed out of politics. Bonhoeffer's dogged determination to stop Hitler's persecution of Jewish pastors and overall tyranny over the Evangelical Church of Germany ultimately led to his execution on 9 April 1945 (Gruchy 19-21).

The Continual Development of Bonhoeffer's Communal Theology

As Bonhoeffer progressed through the ranks from student, to pastor, to theologian, to Christian (to counteragent, to prisoner, and, finally, to martyr), his theology underwent a gradual metamorphosis. In his doctoral dissertation, Sanctorum Communio (Communion of Saints), written while he was a student at the University of Berlin, Bonhoeffer posits concepts of the sociality of Christ and the Church as preeminent (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* 171). For Bonhoeffer, the individual person exists only through the reality of the "other." Thus, at age 21, he asserted that the individual exists only through the other. Because the individual is not solitary, others must exist in order for the individual to exist. In this sense, God is the other through whom the individual

human being exists. The effect of this relationship is that the individual human being exists as the image of God; therefore, one person is able to become Christ to another (52). From this thesis, Bonhoeffer argues, “God does not desire a history of individual men, but the history of the human community. However, God does not want a community that absorbs the individual into itself, but a community of human beings” (80). In other words, God wants us to maintain our unique distinctiveness (diversity) as human beings, while at the same time, relating to one another in love as a community of believers.

Additionally, Bonhoeffer posits that one’s community of love with one’s neighbor derives and exists solely from one’s faith in God. By giving humanity Jesus Christ, God has both fulfilled the penalty of the law on people’s behalf and has loved individual neighbors. The same God who loves individuals and neighbors, draws people into the church community; thus, his love creates a bond between the person and his or her neighbor (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* 175).

Bonhoeffer purposed to define his theology within the framework of human social and ethical relations in history. “Person,” “primal state,” “sin,” and “revelation” are fully understandable only in relation to sociality. He rejected the individualism of post-Kantian philosophy and existentialism as circumventing a true knowledge of God. Bonhoeffer saw the relationship of the person to the community as one in which the individual submits to the higher obligation of the Church and religious community. Within this context, Bonhoeffer saw sin as destroying the human community because through sin the individual will affirms itself, and not the other person (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works 153*).

Comment [ar6]: Corrected

Several key implications for the ongoing exploration and practice of cross-cultural-cross-racial are located in Bonhoeffer’s theology as presented in the preceding

pages (50-56). Each reason finds deep roots in Bonhoeffer's commitment to the biblical commandment of practiced love, modeled after the love of Christ. Christ's love is not easy love. Christ's love is radical love that continuously calls its participants into relationships of self-effacement, self-sacrifice, and self-examination.

In my opinion, the individualistic, competitive nature that characterizes much of American society does not easily lend itself to such love. Cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry offers to redeem the individualism that pervades much of American Christianity. Cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry is difficult because it is countercultural. It does not always square well with the American system of democracy and majority rule.

Comment [ar7]: Corrected

Through his living, Bonhoeffer, like Christ, consistently declared theocracy as the supreme system of rule. In a theocratic system, God is the ruler of the kingdom. The power and will of the people always defer to the power and will of God. Under such a system, acculturation to society is usually undesirable and all tendencies of human conformity flow toward the image, likeness, and kingdom of God. In that sense, Bonhoeffer's theology offers much to the church of America. American Christians must acknowledge the truth that in God's theocratic kingdom, the Divine Ruler equally values every individual, of every culture, race, ethnicity, country of origin, and language.

No cultural or racial in-groups exist in God's kingdom. Congregations that practice intentional homogeneity, selective inclusion, or blatant exclusion based on race and/or culture essentially place themselves outside the true kingdom of God.[1] In such

[1] One exception to this line of reasoning, of course, would involve Christian communities of first-generation immigrants who need the familiarity of homogeneous congregations of persons who represent their native culture to help them through the difficult process of acclimation and assimilation into a foreign culture. Another exception would be those churches that intentionally open their minds, hearts, and doors to persons of other cultures and races, but remain homogeneous, not by choice, but because of the refusal of persons from diverse cultures and races to join their fellowship.

settings, the preferences and dictates of self-interested American individualism usurp the countercultural rule, authority, and commandments of God regarding his desire for an inclusive kingdom. As a result, intentionally segregated congregations position American individualism to replace God as the reigning monarch in their ecclesial lives. By contrast, Bonhoeffer calls upon the church to assert a countercultural concern for the other that exceeds the self-interested bounds of all human governance (*Life Together* 37-39).[2]

Comment [ar8]: Corrected

The Cost of Discipleship: Relevance for Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Ministry

Bonhoeffer's thinking was alert to the changing theology of the times, as evidenced in his various essays, papers, letters, and books. Karl Barth's influence upon him is evident. Ronald Goetz, author of an online article published during the Karl Barth Centennial, noted that Bonhoeffer rejected Barth's "positivism of revelation." Theologian James Cone sees Bonhoeffer's book *The Cost of Discipleship* as contrasting the scriptural demands of Christian obedience with the "cheap" forms of grace that had so prevalently seeped into Protestantism (88). Cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry calls congregations and pastors into relationships of extreme grace, self-sacrificing grace, out of which emanates extreme rewards. Bonhoeffer's powerful and meaningful message proclaiming the high cost of Christian living continues to offer a new challenge, especially to many postmoderns who are seeking an authentic religion to which they can render total

Comment [ar9]: Corrected

[2] Up to this point, I thoroughly agree with Bonhoeffer's theological understanding of a sanctified community. Through his eyes, one can only see how cross-cultural-cross-racial and multicultural Christian communities offer opportunities for the church to experience a true knowledge of God through Christ. Nevertheless, Bonhoeffer makes a huge theological leap with which I disagree. Bonhoeffer theorizes that the collective "Second Adam" (Christ) supersedes the old man (Adam) through the atonement; thus, he arrives at the concept of "Christ existing as the congregation" (*Christus als Gemeinde existerend*) (Gruchy 6). Insofar as he seems to be referring to the church as the body of Christ, I believe Bonhoeffer is correct. Nevertheless, to state unequivocally or unilaterally that Christ exists *solely* as the congregation is, in my opinion, problematic for solid Christology. Ernst Feil observes, "[T]he issue for him was not so much the concrete Christ who entered history as it was the concept of the church as a collective person" (63).

allegiance. Gushee expounds on this concept:

> One of the besetting signs of certain strands of American evangelicalism is precisely our tendency to acculturate Christian faith to the "American way of life." How frequently we have confused being Christian with being American, loving nation with loving God. How often we have mixed unjust and oppressive cultural norms like racism and indifference to injustice into this distasteful stew, calling it "Christian." Bonhoeffer bears witness to the fact that authentic Christianity sometimes leads one into principled opposition to nation and culture and even to a gallows, or a cross. (3)

All authentic Christian ministry is costly. The high cost of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry does not obviate the necessity for Christians to participate in it. Indeed, Christ's ministry led him to the gallows. The return on the price he paid cannot be measured in temporal terms, only eternal.

Bonhoeffer committed himself relentlessly to the ecumenical movement and to training young pastors. He became increasingly restless with conventional religion, especially the institutional church. Perhaps his greatest gift to Christianity was his willingness to pay exorbitant costs in terms of public popularity to secure the precious gift of exemplifying the life of Christ.

John the Gospel writer acknowledges how Jesus Christ died to gather into one the scattered children of God—an event to take place eschatologically. Bonhoeffer warns that Christians living in the interim of Christ's death and second coming can only live together in visible fellowship with other Christians through the invitation and grace of God. When John himself was exiled on the lonely Isle of Patmos, "the Spirit on the Lord's Day" enabled him to experience a heavenly worship celebration with the seven congregations of Asia and the angels of those congregations (Rev. 1:10-11; 4:1-5:11). In Revelation 7:9, he depicts a vivid scene of that eschatological gathering of all the *ethnos*

who belong to the kingdom of God. They are not mono-ethnic. John says they represent "every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:9). Like Christ, Bonhoeffer calls into community all people here on earth, for the kingdom of God is both already here but not yet fulfilled (*Life Together* 17-19).

Comment [ar10]: Corrected

The Kingdom of God as Conceived by Marcus Borg

Debate continues as to how this eschatological structure can become relevant for contemporary Christianity. Borg, Hundere Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University, is one who has joined this debate. From the outset, I must clarify that I do not embrace all of Borg's theological insights; nevertheless, I do believe Borg has significant and valuable contributions to make toward the formulation of a well-developed theology of the kingdom of God.

In recent years, Borg has studied the literature on the kingdom of God written in the twentieth century. He concludes the Church lacks a "clear and compelling" vision of the kingdom of God. Consequently, the American church has become a syncretistic church. Borg argues the American church mixes elements of Christianity with elements of the "American trinity": individualism, materialism, and ethnocentrism. In addition, Borg believes that insofar as it fails to bring together as a unit the Holy Spirit, the kingdom of God, and justice, twentieth century kingdom theology is incomplete.

In his sermon, Borg states that for Jesus, the kingdom of God was a political metaphor, just as other kingdoms under which Jesus' hearers lived (e.g., the kingdom of Herod, the kingdom of Caesar) were political. Nevertheless, the important distinction, according to Borg, is that the kingdom of God is a theo-political kingdom combining religion and politics. Hence, he deduces simply that *the kingdom of God is what life*

would be like on earth if God were king, and those other guys were not.

According to Borg's understanding, the kingdom of God directly opposed the domination systems of Rome, the Herodian monarchies, and the temple authorities in Jerusalem. These elite ancient rulers structured the political and economic systems so that approximately two-thirds of the annual production of wealth flowed to the wealthiest one to 2 percent of the population. "This was the setting [of injustice] in which Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God," Borg declares. Hence, the theo-political kingdom of God is about God's justice—but not charity. Charity, while extremely important, does not convey the broad, comprehensive implications of God's justice. Borg states that God's justice is about the just distribution of God's earth. This understanding connotes God's sovereignty over all that exists in his kingdom, especially his Christian sanctuaries and his diverse Christian peoples. This understanding is the central proclamation of Psalm 24 in which the psalmist implicitly asks, "To whom does the earth belong?" He answers his own question: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (24:1, KJV).

Jesus, posits Borg, is the prophet of the kingdom of God who stood in the Bible's long prophetic stream of theo-political voices. Jesus' emphasis on God's justice goes all the way back to God's covenant with Israel where it reaches its climax in the story of Moses and the Exodus. There, ancient Israel receives liberty from the unjust domination system of imperial Egypt. Throughout the Hebrew Bible, the prophets are the God-intoxicated voices of peasant religious social protests against the domination systems of their time, which means, primarily, the monarchy within Israel. Moreover, Jesus stands in that same stream of passionate advocacy of God's justice.

Borg asserts that taking Jesus seriously in his emphasis upon the kingdom of God

requires raising the consciousness in the Church about the way systems affect people's lives:

> Jesus was a prophet of the kingdom of God, of God's justice, and it got him killed. This is the political meaning of Good Friday. Good Friday is the domination system's "no" to the kingdom of God. Easter is God's "yes" to Jesus, God's "yes" to the kingdom of God, and God's "no" to the domination systems of this world.

Borg is right in concluding that the Church continues its exclusivist systems consequential to a lack of consciousness among its constituents about how exclusion affects (spiritually, socially, mentally, emotionally, and physically) those individuals and groups who are excluded. Contemporary prophets who dare to raise these issues publicly, no matter how sincere, godly, and conciliatory their intentions, often risk ostracism and branding as troublemakers.

The historic Christian church, by inordinately emphasizing the individual Christian experience and the afterlife, has domesticated the political edge threading throughout Scripture and the gospel message of Christ. Beyond primary concerns about personal salvation, heaven, and hell, Christians must be concerned about transforming the world. Beyond the domesticated focus upon individual sin, guilt, repentance, and forgiveness, the kingdom Jesus proclaimed calls humankind to confront systemic sin. Congregations that intentionally exclude persons based upon culture or race perpetuate systemic sin that not only conflicts with the Great Commandment (Mark 12:29-31) but also constitutes unlawful discrimination in public society.

The Relational Theology of Dennis Kinlaw

Kinlaw says the essence of sin is self-interest or selfishness (65-67). Sin defined as such is what shattered the harmony humans were created to enjoy with God and one

another. This harmony is the ideal state God designed for the community of believers to share in the kingdom of God. This state can be achieved only when God is ruler, and God's will, as expressed in Scripture, guides the corporate life of his people. Sinful creatures, Kinlaw notes, displace God and put themselves in the center of their own existence (70-71).

Borg would take Kinlaw's assessment a step further and say the sin of self-interest allows many Americans to deem selective sins as abominable, while totally neglecting to show concern, compassion or hospitality to fellow humans who are culturally or racially different in the God's kingdom. If the kingdom of God is the kingdom governing God's collective Christian peoples, acknowledgment of the way in which sin as self-interest is built into the power structures of society and the Church is critical. God calls the Church to take social justice, human suffering, and the politics of human compassion more seriously. These same causes are also central emphases of United Methodist theology, polity, mission, and ministry; nevertheless, acts of social justice, human healing, and compassion are deemed most genuine in United Methodist congregations that welcome all peoples. As such, they are central theological concerns with regard to cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry within the racially and culturally diverse United Methodist denomination.

Historical Precedents

One of United Methodism's most stubborn problems relating to racial unity finds its roots in the church's participation in African-American enslavement.

Unity in Diversity: Historical Foundations of the United Methodist Church

The United Methodist Church came into existence in 1968 when the former

Evangelical United Brethren Church, established in 1946, merged with the Methodist Church. The Methodist branch of the United Methodist Church has an early history of rich cultural and racial diversity, as well as gender inclusion (*Book of Discipline* 18-20).

John Wesley (the founder of the Methodist movement) and his brother Charles first came to America as Church of England missionaries to the colony of Georgia in 1736. One of their unrealized goals was to evangelize the Native Americans. While visiting Georgia and nearby colonies, John Wesley witnessed firsthand the conditions of American slavery. Horace Walker and Lewis Baldwin tell how, as Wesley interviewed some of the slaves, he was inspired to help them understand Christianity. He spent considerable time teaching them about the faith. He was deeply moved once by a slave woman who listened intently to his teachings. On the following day, not only did she readily answer all of Wesley's questions, but she was able to repeat verbatim the things he had taught her (8). Wesley was so pleased with his success evangelizing a few slaves that he made plans to travel from plantation to plantation, catechizing slaves in Christianity. Colonial planters thwarted Wesley's attempts to evangelize slaves early on. Educated slaves posed a potential threat to the lucrative slave economy (Yrigoyen 49-51).

Despite the southern planters' opposition to Christian instruction for African-Americans, racial inclusion in American Methodism seemed to be common in the northern states—at least for a season. In a New York class meeting organized in 1766 by Phillip Embury and Barbara Heck, an African-American woman named Betty was among those present. By 1795, 12,170 of American Methodism's sixty thousand constituents were African-American (Yrigoyen 60).

Wesley adopted an antislavery stance, requiring any Methodist who bought, sold,

or gave away slaves be expelled from the church, unless such deeds were done to emancipate the slaves. Wesley also called for Methodist slaveholders to make a plan to free their slaves within five years and required preachers to keep journals recording their parishioners' compliance with this plan. Those who persisted in holding slaves received the opportunity to withdraw from the Methodist fellowship; otherwise, they were to be excluded from Methodism for failure to comply with this rule.

The Disunity of Slavery

Southern American Methodist slave owners were not enthusiastic about complying with Wesley's antislavery rule. The entire southern economy revolved around cheap slave labor. Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke were the targets of threats and violence as they preached against slavery in colonial America. Ultimately, they were forced to desist altogether. In 1787, African-American Methodists Richard Allen and Absalom Jones knelt in prayer in the company of white Methodists at Old St. George's Methodist Church in Philadelphia. An embittered trustee ordered them to leave. By the early nineteenth century, racism and slavery issues began to precipitate intense divisions in the Methodist community. The incongruity of slavery with the familial and kingdom paradigms of Christianity and southern Christianity's amazingly tenacious denial of this incongruity made for an incredible theological problem within the denomination (Thomas 45-46).

Comment [ar11]: Corrected

In 1844, the theological issues surrounding slavery and the treatment of those enslaved ripped the denomination apart as white Methodists in the North argued irreconcilably with their white Methodist siblings in the South over what to do with their enslaved African-American "Christian" brothers and sisters. A Plan of Separation was

drafted allowing the annual conferences in slaveholding states to separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church in order to organize their own ecclesiastical structure. Hence, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South came into being. That work culminated in May 1845 in Louisville, Kentucky, as delegates from the southern states met to organize their new church. In 1866, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South adopted a resolution to set up its African-American membership and ministry as an independent church. The half-truthful claim was that African-Americans desired this independence. What the southern church failed to acknowledge was that this African-American desire for independence was likely the natural reaction to a well-conveyed understanding from white Methodists: African-Americans were not welcome as their companions in worship.

Comment [ar12]: Corrected, added word "likely"

The years between 1864 and 1868 saw the creation of eight African-American mission conferences by the northern Methodist Episcopal Church. These later became annual conferences. The first was the Delaware Mission Conference authorized by the 1864 General Conference. The Delaware Mission Conference convened its initial session at John Wesley Methodist Church in Philadelphia on 29 July 1864. A Washington Mission Conference followed, holding its initial session on 27 October 1864. Afterward, the following mission conferences were formed: the Mississippi Mission Conference (25 December 1865), South Carolina Mission Conference (2 April 1866), Tennessee Mission Conference (11 October 1866), Georgia Mission Conference (10 October 1867), and the North Carolina Mission Conference (14 January 1868). These mission conferences, together with the independent racial conferences organized by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South as a result of the General Conference ruling of 1866, were the

annual conferences eventually comprising the Central Jurisdiction (Thomas 45-46).

Racial Exclusion in "Unification"

At the 1939 Uniting Conference, the Methodist Episcopal Church; the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and the Methodist Protestant Church joined together to form the Methodist Church. The estrangement of African-American Methodists from the Methodist Church proper lasted, in theory, until their inclusion almost thirty years later as a jurisdiction in the newly united church. Unfortunately, the era of the Central Jurisdiction did not signal the end of racial division in the Methodist Church. It initiated the beginning of a passive/aggressive, we accept you/we ignore you form of racial exclusion opposed by African-American Methodists (*Book of Discipline* 17-18). The remarks of W. Scott Chinn, published in the 26 January, 1939 edition of *The Christian Advocate, Central Edition* make clear the plight of 300,000 African-American members in the impending unification of the Methodist Church:

Comment [ar13]: Corrected

> As we enter into unification, which provides for a separate Negro (racial) rather than a geographical "jurisdiction" as in the case of the five white jurisdictions, with ours plainly marked "*for Negroes only*" [original emphasis], a familiar sign in these parts, and which greatly embarrasses legitimate Negro members who are a part of the United Church, we find ourselves further handicapped due to the lack of any complete official setup to take over and direct our affairs as we move into this jurisdiction…. Having settled (?) the Negro question by this wicked and unchristian segregation arrangement, everything seems to be taken for granted and no one seems to care whether the Negro gets off to a good start or not in his jurisdiction. (91)

As had been the case many times before in the history of the Methodist Church in America, Chinn's remarks denote how African-Americans repeatedly heard the searing message that their Christian fellowship was not wanted and, indeed, would not be tolerated by their white brothers and sisters. Almost as if attempting to seal the doom of

its black constituency, the Methodist Church thrust its African-American members into the Central Jurisdiction, with virtually no organizational or operational plan in place.

With particular implications for the focus of this study (of ministers in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments) are the questions posed to the Commission on Interdenominational Relations concerning the organization and polity of the newly unified church. “The Uniting Conference” featured these questions. One person asked whether Southern Methodists who had threatened to prevent the completion of the union in their fear of “race equality” actually had grounds to do so. Other questions were telling: “Will a Negro bishop from the Central Jurisdiction be allowed to preside over the General Conference?” and “Is there not great danger of the jurisdictions becoming too independent and self-sufficient, each a law unto itself” (122)? Into this milieu of segregation, bigotry, and mistrust, the Methodist Church thrust the African-American members of the Central Jurisdiction.

The twenty-nine years of the Central Jurisdiction of the Methodist Church were bittersweet for its African American members. In leaving the jurisdiction, as in entering it, African-American Methodists believed wholeheartedly they were a part of God’s kingdom and of God’s destiny for the Methodist denomination at large. What they were never willing to believe was that racism and segregation within the body of Christ were God’s will. Instead, they believed these conditions flowed out of the sinful nature and will of humankind.

African-American Methodists in 1968 embodied the same determination to identify themselves as the people called Methodists as did their predecessors in 1939. Although they were necessarily concerned with the social, economic, and political

oppression of their people as a race, they never lost sight of their Christian responsibility, even opportunity, to love all human beings.

The Church's Exclusion of Native Americans

Comment [ar14]: Corrected

Randy Woodley, a Keetoowah Cherokee Native American, speaks of the church's passive role during the tragic forced removal of his native Cherokees from their homelands during America's historic gold rush (118-19).

After the discovery of gold in their native territory in the fall of 1838, Cherokee peoples in eight southeastern states from Alabama to Virginia were herded together, forced into stockades, and given little food and no medical care. The following year, in the brutal cold of winter, they were force-marched to Oklahoma, along what is called the Trail of Tears. One out of every four Cherokees succumbed to death from cold, hunger, or disease along that grim trail. Woodley queries, "Where was the Church during these atrocities against the Indians?" (119) The painful answer was that even though *individual* missionaries from different Christian denominations decried these dehumanizing acts against the Cherokees, *all* the denominations involved in mission work to the Cherokees, including the Methodist Church, condoned the forced removal of Cherokees from their native lands (119).

The church not only condoned the imprisonment, exile, and massacre of Native Americans during this time, it also defiled the land with broken treaties. The churches of America sat in passive compliance as the U. S. government broke more than eight hundred treaties with Native tribes. A treaty is a covenant, and God takes covenants very seriously (Woodley 158). Nevertheless, broken covenants historically have summarized the relationship of America and America's churches with Native tribes.

The Continuing Challenge of Unity

The Central Jurisdiction and the Trail of Tears continue to serve today as a challenge to Methodists not to become complacent in the struggle for the recognition of the personhood of all God's people. Christ calls Methodists to confess and repent of any participation in the practices perpetuating racial division, exclusivism, and elitism in local churches, districts, and conferences. All must seek to love all men and women as demonstrated through Christ. That love must be demonstrated in solidarity with all Methodist peoples. Only by seeking to be in love and charity with our neighbors of all skin colors can United Methodists remain faithful to the call of Christ into full fellowship with him in the kingdom of God.

Intergroup Conflict Management

When minorities, such as African-Americans and Native Americans are positioned in cross-cultural-cross-racial leadership over majority (Anglo-American) followers, mainstream leadership theories are insufficient to explain the dynamics of ensuing leader-follower interactions. In such situations, group identity viewed as cultural identity becomes a helpful lens through which the experience and impact of individual diversity is examined. Simultaneously, a focus on group-level differences is maintained. All humans are cultural beings shaped by the cultures of the groups to which they belong. Therefore, cross-cultural-cross-racial groups must be aware of how the cultural differences among various groups will impact their interpersonal and organizational processes and outcomes as they interact and work together.

With regards to the intergroup dynamics between minority group leaders and majority group followers, the comparative study, "African American Leaders'

Perceptions of Intergroup Conflict," by Jean A. Masden and Reitumetse Obakeng Mabokela is particularly useful. Masden and Mabokela examine how African-American assistant principals perceived intergroup conflict within the context of their work with European American teachers in desegregated suburban schools. The African-American principals were successful in establishing leader-member trust as minority leaders in groups involving both minority and majority members. Because both schools and churches reflect the diversity, class, gender, socioeconomic status, and nationality of their constituencies, many aspects of Masden and Mabokela's study are relevant to the plight of minority pastors appointed to lead cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations.

The researchers examined several properties of intergroup conflict. These properties included the following:

- competing goals,
- competition for resources,
- cultural differences,
- power differences,
- demands (on behalf of the majority group) for conformity versus affirmation of the minority group's identity,
- physical and psychological group boundaries,
- affective patterns (associating positive feelings with one's own group and negative feelings with other groups),
- cognitive formations (subjective and objective perceptions of other groups and their efforts that are transmitted as propositions about other groups in relation to one's own group members), and

- leadership behavior (how the role of the leader in a network of intergroup relations determines the intensification of intergroup conflict; 39).

When applied to a pastoral context, the findings of Madsen and Mabokela suggest that cross-cultural-cross-racial denominational leaders must examine their leadership in response to issues of diversity. They must create trust, establish teams that dispel stereotypical roles for minority groups, and promote dialogue on cultural religious differences when responding to the spiritual and pastoral needs of pastors and congregations involved in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry (57).

Current Practices in Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial and Multiracial Ministry

Several researchers have explored the various practices and experiences of cross-cultural-cross-racial and multiracial ministry. Among the leaders in this arena are Charles Foster and George Yancey.

Charles Foster: *Embracing Diversity*

Charles Foster's book amply fulfills three stated objectives:

1. to explore the impact of cultural and racial diversity in U. S. and Canadian society on the identity and mission of congregations;

2. to examine the dynamics of leadership in congregations that embrace diversity; and,

3. to explore the dynamics of 'difference' at work in the leadership of congregations (ix).

Of all the materials I have read on leadership of diverse congregations, this relatively compact book is one of the most well-researched. Foster describes himself as a "white Anglo Saxon Protestant male" who personally has never experienced any

appreciable acts of racism or ethnocentrism. He states that this book was a response to a "calling of God" to address issues of power and relationship occurring when meeting people of different cultures and races (x).

As a minority leader, I find Foster's insight into the issues of different ethnic groups both rare and refreshing. He insists distinctive leadership issues arising in diverse congregations occur at the infrastructure of congregations. The challenge for leadership is to pay close attention to these communal practices—those lying beneath the surface of the liturgical, educational, missional, and administrative functions of the congregation (xv-xvi). This study sought to identify these behaviors and practices.

Foster begins by dealing with practices affecting the embracing of diverse cultures. He defines the word "embrace" as "movement to create space in oneself for the other: while communicating that I do not want to be without the other in his otherness" (1-2). I find that people in cross-cultural situations often have difficulty embracing the "other." For whites and blacks in America initiating such relationships is particularly difficult because of the embedded values, beliefs, and attitudes that thread throughout the history of America. Nevertheless, my experience is that such "embracing" can occur in congregations when individuals have ample opportunities to become acquainted with one another in an environment that encourages close inter-cultural relationships and celebrates cultural differences. A Christian community of diversity allows for each person or group to benefit from closeness with others of different ethno-cultural backgrounds without losing the integrity of its own identity.

One of the most helpful gleanings from Foster is his examination of the practices by which congregations negotiate the differences they encounter. Foster succinctly

defines “multicultural congregations” as those seeking to embody some form of equity in the power relations of the various groups within the congregation. This concept is of utmost importance for successful cross-cultural-cross-racial relationships. It also highlights one of the most draining aspects for leadership in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. Unlike leaders of mono-ethnic congregations, leaders of cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations must make the shift from merely transmitting shared beliefs to mediating both the transmission of particular cultural expressions of faith and the transformation of those expressions that arise in interactions of congregational life (29-48). Personally, I find every moment in the life of the church that highlights an intersection between faith and culture becomes a “teaching moment.” The more congregations can see and celebrate the theological reasons for embracing cultural expressions of faith, the more doing so becomes a natural part of their Christian identity and behavior. Churches embodying the mission of Christ find themselves compelled to embrace the racial and cultural diversity in their midst.

In each of my pastoral appointments, I have been struck by how people begin to bond across lines of class, culture, and race when given the opportunity to learn about one another in small groups. In my previous appointment, I intentionally became a member of a Companions in Christ spiritual formation group. Through informal wrestling with application of scriptural meanings to current life situations, as well as through the sharing of personal stories and anecdotes, bonding occurred automatically that no amount of intentional socializing could have afforded.

A valuable aspect of Foster’s book along these lines is the focus on congregational conversations shaped by the liturgical, educational, and administrative life

of the congregations (74-99). As these conversations unfold, congregations begin to develop culturally related rituals of acceptance, practices of solidarity, while empowering speakers, legitimizing speech, and accepting cultural ambiguities. In chapter five, Foster examines the significance of congregation-wide events in ordering the life and mission of the congregation.

In the last chapter, Foster focuses exclusively on the leadership of multicultural congregations. He has grasped an essential truth when he states the main descriptor of such leadership is "transformative." The primary focus (beyond following God's will) for any cross-cultural-cross-racial pastor is nurturing change. Pastors of cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations must always seek to facilitate the attitudinal, ethical, and behavioral changes in the congregation, allowing the diverse cultural groups to form new and interactive relationships among themselves and with God. Not only clergy, but lay leaders and staff must become so adamant in their commitment to a given cultural community that they are willing to give up things as they are so they can embrace what might be.

I believe pastors and leaders of cross-cultural-cross-racial communities must have an overarching, transcending vision of building the kingdom of God. Foster cautions that the vision of what might be has to be powerful enough to sustain the congregation through the fears accompanying those necessary, radical congregational changes. Pastors and lay leaders of multicultural congregations are people capable of both facing and embracing fear (118).

Foster posits that triumph over the fear of change is rooted in the church leadership's ability to transmit both the cultural traditions of its various constituencies

and to transform those traditions through a mutual process of appreciation and critique. Key abilities for leaders in general become particularly critical for leaders of multicultural congregations. For instance, a critical skill for leaders of multicultural congregations is the ability to inspire the development of meaningful relationships among their members. They must also be able to lead the congregation in establishing ground rules for corporate conduct and decision making (120).

Comment [ar15]: corrected

Moreover, says Foster, leaders must be willing and able to identify and deal with the reality of the disparities lying embedded in structures shaped by centuries of white privilege and black oppression. In fact, leaders who ignore that reality serve to perpetuate it. Foster aptly observes that leaders of culturally and racially diverse congregations seek ways to foster quality relationships among diverse groups. The goal of these relationships is not empathy, which Foster states is impossible to attain. Rather, the goal is to be able to bracket one's own cultural assumptions and perspectives in order to enter into the other's world of assumptions, beliefs and perspectives (122).

I remember bracketing my own perspectives about food the first time I ate with the members of a Cambodian congregation. Although I was repulsed by both the smell and the taste of the food, I ate it out of love and respect for the women who so lovingly prepared it. Over time, Cambodian cuisine has become one of my favorites.

Foster is right when he says that times when persons who are different come together in solidarity "are typically identified with the indwelling presence of God" (123). Those who embrace the otherness of humanity understand the significance of their relationship with God—the source of cultural differences (123).

One of Foster's most valuable contributions to the understanding of leadership in

multicultural churches is his treatment of power dynamics. *Negotiation* on behalf of the entire congregation is the keyword. Secondly, successful multicultural congregations demonstrate the dynamic of solidarity. Their leaders know how to inspire and encourage their members to exist alongside one another without overwhelming or being overwhelmed and without controlling or being controlled. Their goal is for the people of God to interact out of the freedom of intimacy and the responsibility of critique (124-26).

Personally, I appreciate Foster's recognition of the determination with which pastors and laity of cross-cultural-cross-racial and multicultural congregations lead. The pastors he interviewed had all been at their churches for ten, fifteen, twenty years; all had successful ministries. "In many instances," says Foster, "both pastors and laypersons have lost friends who did not understand their commitment to this new vision for congregational community. Rarely do these people receive much public recognition for the challenge of their effort" (126).

No ten easy steps to successful ministry in multicultural congregations exist. It is difficult, long-range work. Results do not become visible in three to eight years. A sense of eschatological expectation constrains and sustains these leaders, enabling them to lead a congregation through long years of negotiating differences. Therefore, most are so excited about their work that even at the time of retirement, they voice regret in leaving because deep and lasting cross-cultural relationships are being formed.

George Yancey: *One Body, One Spirit*

In *One Body, One Spirit*, Yancey offers five important contributions I find particularly meaningful to this study of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. First of all, he is the front-runner in completing the first nationwide study on multiracial congregations.

According to Yancey's findings, only 8 percent of all churches are truly multiracial. Yancey defines multiracial as any church in which no one racial group comprises more than 80 percent of the worshipers in at least one major worship service. He makes a distinction between these churches and a much higher percentage of churches with racially diverse members who are immigrants or inner city outreach groups that worship at a different time or place than the main body of the church. These churches have a main worship service attended by members of a given race, and separate worship services for members of other races. Yancey observes that churches tend to remain mono-ethnic, not because the church leadership has barred persons of other ethnicities but because of their inability to create multiracial Christian environments (15-17).

Yancey notes that early in the history of America, indentured servants and sometimes slaves participated in multiracial congregations (albeit a situation of segregation and oppression for the latter) with Anglo proprietors. As tensions arose over slavery, racial hostility towards African-Americans took root, flourishing to even greater heights after the Civil War. The residuals of this centuries-old hostility continue to impede twenty-first century congregational integration between Anglo and African-Americans. As I have implicated throughout this paper, this lingering hostility is the very unfortunate result of African-Americans and white Americans feeling they cannot converse openly and frankly about misperceptions, attitudes, and myths that get passed along from generation to generation, as well as the denial thereof. The propensity for congregational integration of Hispanic or Asian-Americans with Anglo-Americans is greater than for African-Americans. Still, the probability of Asians and Hispanics integrating white congregations is influenced positively by three factors: their ability to

speak English, a higher income, and a higher educational status (*One Body* 23-28).

The second valuable contribution Yancey makes is raising the question that is always painfully obvious but that most clergy rarely ask publicly: Should multiracial churches exist? Yancey attributes the two major arguments against multiracial churches to a church growth paradigm and a cultural pluralism argument. Church growth Christians argue that churches where people feel comfortable are the growing churches; therefore, these churches create a comfortable monoculture. They fear multiracial churches will not grow because of the members' different lifestyles and experiences, which create the theoretical possibility of conflict and an uncomfortable atmosphere for new church attendees.

Cultural pluralism questions whether integration has value at all. When members of multiple races integrate, they risk compromising the distinctiveness and integrity of their minority cultures and being dominated by the majority race. Assimilation by the Anglo-American culture, they believe, denigrates the minority culture and leads to the false conclusion that the majority culture is superior. Because church is an important center of culture, cultural pluralists remain skeptical of multiracial churches (*One Body* 29-40).

Comment [ar16]: Correct

While agreeing that church growth advocates and cultural pluralists raise legitimate concerns, Yancey asserts that neither church growth alone nor culture alone represents the primary purpose for the existence of the church of Jesus Christ. He points to the growing presence of twenty-first century Americans who are comfortable with people of all races as an indicator that in the future mono-racial—not multiracial—churches may struggle to grow (*One Body* 35-36). I agree with Yancey in this regard.

Comment [ar17]: *Correct*

The third helpful contribution Yancey makes is his detailed description of four advantages of multiracial churches:

1. they are able to reach the ever-increasing numbers of multiracial communities;

2. they promote racial reconciliation by providing a setting for interracial interaction;

3. they demonstrate racial unity as a witness (as opposed to paying mere lip-service); and,

4. they represent obedience to God (*One Body* 29-50).

Comment [ar18]: Corrected

The fourth helpful insight Yancey contributes is the importance of having multiracial leadership. This observation confirms my own finding during the course of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. I realized as long as I had racially and culturally different lay leaders with me in highly visible positions, leadership and ministry progressed much more smoothly. Cross-cultural-cross-racial and multi-racial leadership facilitates inclusive worship and enables minority racial groups to adapt better to cultural differences. According to Yancey, leadership in the successful multiracial church must be multiracial. People are often concerned that their racial group will be ignored, yet diversifying the pulpit is an efficient way to address that concern. Visible multiracial leadership also raises the confidence level of the members that their concerns will be heard. Yancey states that according to a Lilly Foundation study, the eight out of one hundred truly multiracial American churches intentionally integrate both their clergy and lay leadership (*One Body* 86-90).

Comment [ar19]: Correct

Along these lines, Yancey makes (for me) the painfully startling point to which I alluded earlier concerning Foster's work: "The degree of alienation that African

Americans face is usually greater than that of other racial groups, and as such blacks need more assurances than other racial minorities that their concerns will be heard in the church" (*One Body* 87). Yancey suggests groups especially alienated in a community (first-generation immigrants, economically deprived groups) need a member of that group within the leadership structure of the church (*One Body* 87).

Comment [ar20]: Correct

Yancey makes one final point that warrants attention regarding cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. He warns that because Christians are often blind to their own biases, they tend to assume their cultural norms are the best, and they place spiritual value on cultural values that have no spiritual importance. "When we do not recognize the power of our cultural biases, we often fail to see how we justify the leadership potential of a prospective leader upon our own cultural bias instead of upon scripturally based criteria" (*One Body* 93).

Comment [ar21]: Correct

The pastors in Yancey's study felt a pastoral leader of a multiracial congregation needed to be sensitive to the needs people of different races bring to the multiracial church. Pastors need to be able to receive, evaluate, and appropriately handle the criticism that will inevitably emerge when a church attempts to create a multiracial atmosphere. They also must be able and willing to empower others, to relate well to those of different races, and to learn the customs and cultural nuances of each group. Most importantly, ministers in multiracial leadership must be patient (*One Body* 120-27).

Comment [ar22]: Correct

Jesus: A House of Prayer for All the Nations

When Jesus came into his ministry, he came announcing the kingdom of God. Within Jesus's kingdom was the hope of a better world. Symbolizing that hope was an institution—a house—so important to Jesus he overturned the tables of those who

desecrated it. That house represented the culmination of Jesus's dreams and visions of the ministry into which his Father had sent him. It was the "house of prayer for all the nations" (Mark 11:17).

The early Christians embraced Jesus's vision of a house of prayer for all the nations. Not only were they willing—they were able—to succeed in forming healthy, cohesive communities of diverse ethnic, social, and religious groups. Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and barbarians, slaves and free, male and female all came together in the unity of Christ. Faith was the essential ingredient of both the unity and prosperity of the early Church.

I believe Jesus desires to restore the reality of that vision to United Methodist Christians throughout the world. He has sent many persons out into his kingdom and has assigned to them the task of fulfilling his vision of a "house of prayer for all the nations." As men, women, boys and girls of every tribe, nation, and kindred are drawn to the house, united by his Spirit in prayer, I believe that his will shall be done, and the final glory of his kingdom will come.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

United Methodist clergy who are serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments are in a unique position to assess the overall experience of racial inclusiveness as it relates to the local church.

Problem

Currently, fewer than 4 percent of United Methodist clergy members in the United States are serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments (U.S. Data; GCFA). The disparity between the denomination's policy of open itineracy and the relatively low percentage of cross-cultural-cross-racial pastoral appointments is the problem of this study.

Comment [ar23]: Need reference for statistic

Purpose

The overarching purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of United Methodist ministers who serve as pastors in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry appointments from the ministers' perspectives.

Research Questions

Four primary research questions guided the extent of this study.

Research Question #1

What major factors lead to cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments?

The answers to this question provided information about the desirability, preparation, and intentionality or lack thereof on behalf of the pastor, congregation, and denominational officials in making cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. These and other related factors could have a considerable impact upon the initial and ongoing

relationship between and among pastor, congregation, and ecclesial authorities.

Research Question #2

How do United Methodist pastors serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments describe their experiences?

This question served to elicit information from pastors about their unique experiences in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Research Question #3

What implicit and explicit cultural beliefs, attitudes, values, and myths surfaced within the context of the pastor and congregation's ministry together?

The beliefs, attitudes, values, and myths of a cultural group constitute the cultural worldview, which establishes the central governing set of concepts, presuppositions, and values by which that group lives. A clash between the pastor's cultural worldview and the congregation's prevailing worldview could potentially hinder the effectiveness of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Research Question #4

What major factors contribute to the success and/or lack of success of cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments?

A major aspect of this research was to identify the perceived factors contributing to the success or lack of success of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry from the pastor's perspective.

Description of the Project

The first phase involved deriving a simple random sampling (384 random numbers) of the 1,650 United Methodist ministers in the United States serving in cross-

cultural-cross-racial ministry. In this phase, quantitative research addressed the perceptions of the thirty-nine responding pastors of cross-cultural-cross-racial churches and 340 of their congregants regarding their congregation's openness to interactions and relationships with persons of different cultures and racial ethnicities. In the second phase, qualitative interviews explored the overall ministry experiences of twenty-five pastors selected from the quantitative study, while probing the congregation's worldview as one of an array of possible variables arising in the ministers' self-descriptions of their experiences in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

This study begins with the following assumption: the greater the congregation's and pastor's reported openness to being enriched by the cultural worldview represented by the other, the more positive and effective the overall experience will be for the pastor who serves in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of all the United Methodist ministers serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments in the denomination's five geographic jurisdictions throughout the United States. The denomination's General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) provided a listing of these ministers per e-mail request. As of December 2007, some 1,650 ministers were serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments in urban, suburban, and rural churches (GCFA).

The sampling design of the Survey of Congregational Openness was single stage. This study made use of simple random sampling representative of the 1,650 total numeric cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments in the United Methodist denomination in the United States during the 2006-07 conference year. This probabilistic sample utilized a

computer-generated random numbers table of 384 non-repeating random numbers between 1 and 1650, thereby amplifying the study's capability of generalizing to the entire population.

From the 384 pastors identified and contacted in the survey sample, thirty-nine pastors and their selected congregants responded within the designated time frame. Of the thirty-nine pastors who responded to the survey, twenty-four (61.5 percent) were male, and fifteen (38.5 percent) were female. The racial/ethnic groupings of the pastors were as follows: twenty (51.3 percent) African-Americans, six (15.4 percent) Asian-Americans, nine (23 percent) Anglo-Americans, two (5.1 percent) Hispanic Americans, and two (5.1 percent) Native Americans.

The pastors ranged in age as follows:

1. five pastors (12.8 percent) were between 36-45,
2. nineteen pastors (48.7 percent) were between 46-55,
3. eleven pastors (28.2 percent) were between 56-65,
4. two pastors (5.1 percent) were 66 and above, and
5. two pastors (5.1 percent) did not list their age.

Educational levels of the pastors ranged from below high school (one) to graduate school (twenty-six). The overwhelming majority of pastors (66.7 percent) had completed a graduate degree.

Twenty-five pastors representing the five denominational geographic jurisdictions accepted selection for pastoral interviews. Demographic characteristics considered in selecting these pastors included gender, ethnicity, and length of experience in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments.

Instrumentation

This project utilized two instruments. Both instruments assessed aspects of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry experiences and perceptions from the pastors' viewpoints. The first instrument was a researcher-assembled survey (see Appendix B). The survey consisted of modified components from one intact scale, questions I designed, a listing of scriptural interpretation principles reformatted as questions, and a brief researcher-designed section on the participants' demographic information. The second instrument was a researcher-designed pastoral interview questionnaire (see Appendix A).

Survey of Congregational Openness

A self-administered researcher-designed survey solicited pastors' and congregants' perceptions of their particular congregations' overall openness, attitudes, experiences, and religious beliefs concerning racially and culturally different persons. This instrument, designed as a six-point Likert scale, consists of two subscale components. Eleven of the twenty questions in the first section solicited information about the participants' view (the pastor and nine to ten members of his or her congregation) of their congregation's cross-cultural-cross-racial openness. This subsection utilized questions adapted from the *Experiences and Attitudes Survey* (Gonsalves, Haresign, and Marchetti) and other researcher-designed questions. The remaining nine questions in section one dealt with the congregations' Christian beliefs and values as perceived by the participants. This researcher-designed subscale utilized foundational principles of racial reconciliation listed by Ware (38-39). I received letters by e-mail granting permission to use items from each of these sources (see Appendixes G and H).

The second part of the survey instrument consisted of a demographic section with six items denoting the participant's ethnicity, church location setting, vocation, education level, gender, and age. The vocational table from the U. S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics "Standard Occupational Classification" provided a standardized listing of occupations.

Pastoral Interview Questionnaire

The pastoral interview allowed the pastors selected to discuss, in-depth, their experiences in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. The primary open-ended question was, "What has been your experience in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry?" The development of eleven interview questions ensured uniformity in the general plan of inquiry in the pastoral interview. Earl Babbie describes the qualitative interview as an interaction between interviewer and respondent in which the interviewer establishes the direction of the conversation, and then pursues the topics raised by the interviewee. This technique requires the qualitative interviewer to be thoroughly familiar with the vital questions the interview seeks to answer (314). Hence, the questions on the pastoral interview questionnaire prompted me to probe for missing pieces of critical information as interviewees talked about their unique experiences in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

The subjects' responses to interview questions 1, 2, and 3 provided the information necessary to answer research question #1:

1. Did you desire a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment? If yes, what were some of your reasons? If no, what were some of your objections?

2. Who initiated your cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment?

3. Which circumstances led to this cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment?

The subjects' responses to interview questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 provided the necessary information to answer to research question #2:

4. What has been your experience in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry? (What have been the advantages? Disadvantages? Struggles? Triumphs?)

5. Which words, phrases, and terminology best facilitate candid conversations about cross-cultural-cross-racial relationships? Which (words, phrases, terminology) do not?

6. How long have you served at your present cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment?

7. If this cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment is not your first, what has been the total length of your tenure in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments?

8. What characteristics best facilitate cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments for your congregation?

11. How well has your cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment gone?

The subjects' responses to interview question 9 provided the necessary information to answer research question #3:

9. What attitudes or perceptions did members of your congregation and denominational officials convey to you about persons of your racial or cultural heritage?

The subjects' responses to interview question 10 provided the necessary information to answer research question #4:

10. What major factors have contributed to the success or lack of success of your appointment?

Validity and Reliability

Improvement and three revisions of survey questions led to validity establishment for the Survey of Congregational Openness. In January 2006, one hundred persons in a High Point, North Carolina, church participated in the pretest of the original Survey of Congregational Openness and Readiness to help ascertain validity and reliability of the instrument. Based on recommendations of the pretest participants, the researcher revised the instrument and renamed it the Congregational Openness Survey. Twelve persons in the Charlotte, North Carolina, area took the revised survey in February 2007. Afterward, the researcher subjected the instrument to the Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation/Reliability Matrix, thereby eliminating twenty-six of the original forty-six non-demographic survey questions. The remaining twenty questions correlated around four factors with Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients of .87, .80, .84, and .94 respectively (see Appendix J).

Seven United Methodist clergy from the Western North Carolina Conference agreed to pretest the Pastoral Interview Questionnaire. Pastors received and completed written copies of the instruments and wrote their responses on the forms. Their appropriate responses indicated they had correctly understood the questions. Some commented that the questions made them think carefully about their various cross-cultural-cross-racial experiences and believed the questions were well-suited for gaining in-depth understanding of the experiences of ministers serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Pretests

Pretesting included both instruments used in the study.

Pretest of the Pastoral Interview Questionnaire

Of the seven clergy who completed pretests of the Pastoral Interview Questionnaire, five had varying levels of prior experience in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. The other two clergy did not have such experience in ministry but answered the questions as related to general cross-cultural-cross-racial experiences. The time for completing the eleven interview questions ranged from twenty-five to thirty minutes. Immediately following the interviews, I sought feedback about the instrument and recorded the interviewees' responses. The clergy participants found the questions easy to understand and offered no suggestions for improvement or revision.

Pretest of the Congregational Openness and Readiness Survey

One hundred members of a United Methodist church in High Point, North Carolina, pretested the original Congregational Openness and Readiness Survey in January 2006. Distribution and completion of the surveys occurred on-site. Pretest surveys included spaces to record beginning and ending times. Participants received instructions to make notes beside any survey items containing confusing wording and to offer suggestions for rewording and/or reformatting. Notes were made of the length of time required for the survey, which varied from fifteen to thirty minutes. The participants' subsequent verbal and written comments indicated the survey was too long and some of the questions were confusing.

I revised the original survey based on the participants' suggestions and renamed the instrument Survey of Congregational Openness. Twelve participants from a Charlotte, North Carolina, United Methodist church pretested the revised survey in February 2007. An experienced statistician processed the data by computer and derived reliability

coefficients for the individual characteristics of each section of the survey.

Data Collection

Each aspect of the study utilized a data collection procedure.

Survey of Congregational Openness

I sent e-mail letters to all the United Methodist bishops from all the annual conferences where clergy elected for the study were appointed. The purpose of these e-mail letters was to introduce myself to the bishops, to inform them about the topic, intent, and scope of the research, and to solicit the bishop's support for the study. In response to resulting communications, further phone calls and/or e-mails followed to the bishops, directors of Ethnic and Nurturing Ministries, and directors of Congregational Development in the affected annual conferences. These contacts served the function of clarifying the purpose of the study and answering any questions.

Each of the 384 pastors identified in the survey sample received a survey packet by United States Postal Service containing eleven surveys including one marked "pastor," and ten others for each of ten congregants who represented, as closely as possible, the diversity of the congregation.

Three hundred and eighty-four survey packets containing a total of 4,224 surveys were mailed to the pastors selected by random sampling and their congregants. Each packet contained the following items: instruction sheets, consent forms, survey forms, and a self-addressed and self-stamped 9" x 11" manila envelope for returning the packets by United States mail. After one week, all selected pastors who had an e-mail address listed on the United Methodist Web site church location directory received a friendly reminder by e-mail, along with a zipped file attachment containing electronic copies of

each of the forms sent previously in the mailed survey packets. One week later, pastors received a second e-mail reminder with the same electronic forms attached. Pastors who did not have e-mail addresses listed on the Web site received friendly reminders by telephone asking them to complete and return their survey packets. Correct mailing addresses were procured for all undeliverable or returned mail packets and re-mailed within three days of receipt.

Thirty-nine pastors and 340 of their selected congregants responded within a period of thirty days. From these thirty-nine responding pastors, twenty-five representing the five denominational geographic jurisdictions accepted selection for one-on-one phone interviews. Demographic characteristics considered in selecting these pastors included gender, ethnicity, and length of experience in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments.

Pastoral Interview Questionnaire

At the beginning of the phone interviews, I explained the nature and purpose of the interviews, as well as the anonymity of the participant and the confidentiality of the interview to the participants in detail. Follow-up contacts by person-to-person phone calls established the date, time, and expected length of the interviews. Participants granted permission to have their interviews taped to ensure the accuracy of the data recorded. After the transcription of the interviews and the completion and acceptance of the research study by officials of Asbury Theological Seminary, participants agreed to have their tapes destroyed. As closely as feasible, the selection process integrated the characteristics of pastoral gender, ethnicity, length of tenure in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments, and educational levels representative of each jurisdiction’s population.

Consequential to geographic distance constraints, all interviews took place by

phone. Asked to describe their experience in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry, participants elaborated freely without interruption. Free-flowing questions from the interview questionnaire probed the participants to supply pertinent data, thereby assuring the continuity and reliability of the study. Interviewer notes recorded in a field research notebook provided an additional source of data.

Categorization of data under the headings of the four research questions followed the verbatim transcription of the interview. The research team, particularly the statistician, assisted with this task. Clear, mutually exclusive definitions explained each category. Review and revision of these categories continued until information took form in a valid and reliable format, and a table was created.

Data Analysis

The research team statistician tabulated by computer, analyzed and interpreted the results of the survey data. Following John W. Creswell's steps for analyzing data (160-61), the following progression ensued:

Comment [ar24]: Corrected

1. report of information (in table form) about the number and percentages of sampling members who did and did not return the survey;

2. discussion of the method for determining response bias;

3. identification of the statistical procedure (i.e., multiple regression, one-way analysis of variance) for developing scales and making reliability checks of the scales; and,

4. identification of the statistics and the statistical computer program for testing the major research questions in the study.

Summaries of the data included descriptive and inferential statistics, means, and standard

deviations.

Ethics

In order to protect the anonymity of individuals, roles, and incidents in this project, I carefully followed several steps in collecting and analyzing data. All participants in both the survey and interview components of the study were identified either directly (survey participants) or indirectly (interviewees) through the initial random sample of pastors serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. I followed this protocol partially to obviate all possibilities for personal subjectivity in the selection of study participants. Furthermore, I mentioned no names of survey participants, their denominational leaders, or their specific districts or annual conferences. All pastors received packets containing introductory letters explaining the purpose of the study and the participants' volition in choosing to complete or not to complete the Survey of Congregational Openness. Those few pastors who called or e-mailed to decline participation in the study received a gracious acknowledgement of their thoughtful consideration. Their reasons for nonparticipation were freely accepted. Pastors from the affirmatively responding congregations returned signed and dated statements of agreement to participate in the study along with their completed surveys.

Prior to mailing, I encoded each survey packet with a number in the bottom right-hand corner that corresponded to the pastors' district, conference, and jurisdiction. As packets were returned and data was collected, each of the pastor's and their congregants' surveys were assigned this same numeric code, along with a distinguishing alphabetic code (i.e., 234a, 234b, 234c, etc.). I recorded all data related to a particular pastor and

congregation according to the numeric/alphabetic codes assigned, and the statistician and I analyzed and interpreted the data using these same codes.

All participants in the pastoral interviews gave their verbal consent to be interviewed and participated in the scheduling of the interview. Only a few pastors desired to go ahead with their interviews at the time of the initial telephone contact. In addition, at the beginning of each interview, I read aloud the introductory protocol on the Pastoral Interview Questionnaire to each interviewee and paused to answer any questions and to solicit their verbal permission to proceed. With the full knowledge and permission of the interviewees, these verbal permissions were tape recorded, along with the rest of the interviews. I informed the pastors interviewed that I would destroy these tapes within four to six weeks after the approval of the study, or, if they desired, I would return their tapes to them. None of the pastors opted to have the tapes mailed to them. I also informed the interviewees that I would personally inform them of the results of the project after the formal approval and acceptance of the study.

During the interviews, I was fastidious about refraining from interjecting any personal remarks or leading statements into the pastors' reflections about their personal experiences in ministry. I only spoke when I needed to rephrase a question for the interviewee's clarification and recorded only the remarks the pastors offered in response to the eleven interview questions. Occasionally, I conversed further with interviewees after the taped formal interviews were finished; nevertheless, only the pertinent data conveyed by the interviewees during the actual formal interviews was included in the written findings of this study. Prior to beginning any post-interview conversations, I

informed the interviewees that nothing they discussed with me after the final interview question would be included in the research findings.

I used as many relevant verbatim quotes as possible (without potentially jeopardizing the identity of the interviewees) in conveying the pastors' experiences as possible. The blending of pastoral interview data with survey data yielded much richer research findings than either the survey or the pastoral interviews could have yielded alone.

Finally, I derived all data collected and analyzed within the context of this study directly from the 379 returned Congregational Openness Surveys and from the verbatim information tape-recorded in response to the eleven uniform questions asked of each pastor during the pastoral interviews.

Variables

Intervening variables that may have affected the outcome of the study include the pastor's personal demographics encompassing gender, level of pastoral experience, level of intercultural experience, cultural worldview, familiarity with and sensitivity to the congregational culture, emotional intelligence, and language and communication skills. Other intervening variables of church demographics included the age, multicultural exposure of various key groups and leaders within the congregation, education, and the willingness of the congregation to embrace attitudinal change. Still other intervening variables included level of denominational intervention and support, unexpected circumstances that temporarily affected the tenor of pastor-congregation relations at the time of the interview, and the general social distance among cultural groups within the geographic region.

Generalizability

This study was delimited to include pastors of United Methodist churches serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. The purpose of the study was to explore the experiences of those pastors while examining the impact of the congregation's cultural worldview upon the outcome of the cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry relationship. The use of simple random sampling increased the generalizability of this study to churches and denominations where organizational structure and the average length of pastoral tenure is similar to that of United Methodist pastors in the appointive process. Chapter 4 summarizes the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In 1968, the Methodist Church in America took a strong, ethical position to end ecclesial divisiveness along the lines of racial ethnicity and color. After twenty-nine years, the denomination officially reclaimed the African-American Methodists she had abandoned at the Uniting Conference of 1939, casting them into a jurisdictional orphanage delineated by culture and skin color, called the Central Jurisdiction. This bold move to include all United Methodists under the same umbrella of ecclesial and geographical connectionalism heralded a new era of worshiping and bonding together as the body of Christ.

Over the past forty years since the desegregation of the 1960s and the dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction, culturally and racially diverse peoples have increasingly populated American neighborhoods in which traditional United Methodist churches have thrived. While different in some ways, many of these diverse peoples have shared certain essential societal beliefs and values, namely those embodied in the Christian faith.

The dissonance between the vision of the United Methodist Church in America of becoming an inclusive church and the level to which that vision of inclusiveness has become a widespread reality continues to be the problem of this study. Nevertheless, the United Methodist clergy who participated in this study, both male and female, have been willing to launch out into new, sometimes troubled waters, to help make that vision a complete reality.

The ultimate purpose of this study was to understand better the experiences of United Methodist ministers serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. To this

end, four research questions sought to elicit data relating to the following specific aspects of the pastors' experiences:

1. major factors leading to cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments;

2. pastors' own descriptions of their cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry experiences;

3. attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and biases that surface within the context of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry; and,

4. major factors that contribute to the success or lack of success of cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments.

Profile of Participants

Thirty-nine United Methodist pastors of cross-cultural-cross-racial churches and 340 of their congregants participated in this study by responding to the Survey of Congregational Openness. Several of these pastors called or e-mailed to notify me of their intention to complete the surveys. Many of them expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the study.

The number of participating congregants for each pastor ranged from two to eleven, with the average number being ten. The majority of the pastors were African-American (51.3 percent) while the majority of the congregants were Anglo-American (56.4 percent). Nearly half of the pastors fell in the 46-55 age range (48.7 percent). The majority of the congregants (69 percent) were above age 45. The pastors were, in large part, highly educated as 79.5 percent had college or graduate degrees; however, educational levels of the congregants were more widely dispersed, with the majority having completed high school or college.

More male clergy responded (twenty-four) to the survey than female clergy (fifteen). For congregants, the opposite was true: 219 female congregants participated in the survey, whereas only 117 male congregants participated (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Demographic Data for Participants in the Survey of Congregational Openness (N=379)

	Pastors (N=39)		Congregants (N=340)	
	N	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	24	61.5	117	34.4
Female	15	38.5	219	64.4
No response			4	1.2
Racial/ethnic group				
African-American	20	51.3	99	29.1
Asian-American	6	15.4	18	5.3
Anglo-American	9	23.1	193	56.8
Hispanic American	2	5.1	10	2.9
Native American	2	5.1	9	2.6
Other			6	1.8
No response			5	1.5
Age range				
18 and below			23	6.8
19-35			23	6.8
36-45	5	12.8	38	11.2
46-55	19	48.7	81	23.8
56-65	11	28.2	71	20.9
66 and above	2	5.1	86	25.3
No response	2	5.1	18	5.3
Educational level				
Below high school	1	2.6	26	7.6
High school graduate	1	2.6	61	17.9
Comm./Tech. college graduate	3	7.7	36	10.6
Some college	3	7.7	52	15.3
College graduate	5	12.8	84	24.7
Graduate school	26	66.7	70	20.6
No response			11	3.2

Five geographical jurisdictions comprise the United Methodist Church in the United States. They are as follows: North Central, Northeastern, South Central, Southeastern, and Western. Each jurisdiction is broken down into annual conferences.

The pastors and their congregants who participated in the Survey of Congregational Openness were surprisingly representative of each of the denomination's five jurisdictions and twenty-seven of its annual conferences.

Interesting patterns emerged as pastors from each of the jurisdictions began to respond to the invitation to participate in the survey. Ministers from the South Central and Western jurisdictions were the quickest to respond. As the Northeastern and Western jurisdictions are known for having large multiethnic populations, I expected more survey respondents to come from these jurisdictions. Surprisingly, the Northeastern jurisdiction produced the fewest survey respondents. One busy minister in the Washington, DC, area explained his view of the problem:

> The ministers in this area do not have time to complete surveys. A lot of research goes on here, so everybody wants you to fill out a survey. We cannot possibly complete all these surveys because we are bombarded with so many.

The Southeastern Jurisdiction had the most respondents. Table 4.2 shows the numbers and percentages of pastors and congregants from each jurisdiction.

Table 4.2. Number and Percentage of Pastors and Congregants from Each Jurisdiction (N=379

		n	%
Pastor			
	North Central	8	20.5
	Northeastern	4	10.3
	South Central	7	17.9
	Southeastern	13	33.3
	Western	7	17.9
	Total	39	100.0
Congregant			
	North Central	75	22.1
	Northeastern	39	11.5
	South Central	58	17.1
	Southeastern	101	29.7
	Western	67	19.7
	Total	340	100.0

Results

Results of the pastoral interviews yielded information that helped answer the four research questions.

Research Question #1: Major Factors Leading to Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Appointments

In answer to the question about major factors leading to cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments, the majority of pastors interviewed indicated they either desired a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment or were open to the idea of such an appointment. One pastor noted, “It’s just a richer experience. I’ve always been drawn to people of other cultures.” An African-American female pastor mentioned lifelong exposure to diversity:

> My father was a Methodist pastor,… and many people came to stay in our home. I've always been around all kinds of people, and was taught to love everybody. I didn't see it as any kind of issue for me to go into a predominantly white congregation, when all my life I have been surrounded by all kinds of people.

Another Anglo pastor and former school public school principal gave the following statement about the circumstances leading to his appointment:

> At the time I was preparing to retire, I decided to go to Course of Study. I told people that I met that I was interested in … [cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry]—felt comfortable if they wanted to [appoint him cross-racially]. When I had my first assignment, it was a little white country church. The same D. S. [district superintendent] asked me if I would take a second assignment at a black church. I said I would.

Interestingly, each of these pastors alludes to previous ongoing interactions with persons of cultural and ethnic diversity.

Some pastors noted that while they did not seek a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment, they had no objections and were willing to try. One pastor indicated that service to "God's people regardless of race" was the important factor, while another stated, "I desired to be appointed wherever God wanted me to be." Only four pastors who indicated they had not sought their cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments said, "No," without offering additional information.

Although the vast majority of pastors interviewed stated they either desired or were open to appointment to cross-racial churches, only two pastors indicated they pursued their own appointment to a cross-racial church. Most stated their district superintendents initiated their appointments, while a few attributed the initiation of their appointment to the bishop and/or cabinet. One pastor indicated the circumstances leading to appointment to a cross-racial church had to do with different races of people seeking the "different style of ministry" that was brought to the area.

Another pastor from the Northeastern jurisdiction associated her appointment with a distinct sense of divine call:

> Literally my husband and I did the Abraham walk because God said so. We left the state, we left the Baptist church where we were happy, where I'd been ordained—we left everything to go to the place where God said, "I'm sending you."

A white male pastor was surprised when after the cross-cultural-cross-racial pastoral congregation he had been assigned began to grow, he learned that prior to his appointment, a vote had been taken to close the church. "The district superintendent said, "God wasn't through with the church yet."

Cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments are not always made with the ultimate goal in mind of cultural and/or racial inclusion. Two Hispanic pastors in the Western Jurisdiction mentioned being appointed cross-culturally-cross-racially in order to facilitate their ultimate mission of establishing a Hispanic mission within the church or elsewhere. One African-American pastor stated the appointment was made because few African-American congregations existed in the area, so the possibility of being appointed in a cross-racial appointment was greater than being in an African-American congregation.

In talking about the reasons for their appointments, a substantial number of pastors indicated they are serving their first cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations, while others have served in such appointments previously.

Research Question #2: How Pastors Serving in Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Appointments Describe Their Experiences

When expressing the advantages of cross-racial-cross-cultural ministry, pastors state they see and understand through new and varied viewpoints. They see such ministry

as a freeing experience that allows them to focus on all of God's children, with less focus on themselves and more focus on "how much we have in common." Serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial churches also provides opportunity for broadening knowledge and understanding about different races and cultures in the greater community. One pastor observed, "When you have more than one viewpoint you have that cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences that makes people more receptive to the teaching and leading of the pastor."

Another pastor cited an advantage of having "more money to participate in the new programs such as discipleship ministries, Faith Quest, the publicity things—Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors." Still another pastor appreciated "the significance of church family and community here, in that the members of this church do not see a lot of the barriers that we face in every day dealings with society. We have Hispanics, African-Americans, Caucasians, one Korean, and a large percentage of Gays. There's an acceptance of all people in this church."

Some pastors expressed disadvantages of isolation, whereas even more voiced discontent at having to worship in a different way. Some spoke of having to choose words carefully, having lack of support, and experiencing racism. Other pastors expressed concerns about efforts to make everyone the same without realizing that the uniqueness of different cultures needs to be recognized.

Pastors noted a failure on behalf of denominational officials to prepare congregations and pastors adequately for interacting with people of different races as a disadvantage. A pastor made the following observation:

> Too few local church congregations have been provided the ground work sensitivity training necessary to receive [the cross-cultural-cross-racial

> appointment]. It just happens, and we do not pay enough attention to getting the congregation ready for the challenge. It's particularly challenging when the pastor becomes the only person of color in the town and his or her family, or it is the first time the congregation has or the whole community has received a female as leader.

Most of the frustrations reported by pastors relate directly or indirectly to the denominational leaders' failure to provide, to both clergy and laity, the kind of effective training and support that leads to sustained cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

An Anglo female pastor noted the disadvantage of not having enough time to spend with certain persons whose company she enjoyed. Pastors also noted that they are sometimes misunderstood and sometimes struggle with what is expected of them. A Hispanic pastor (number 1474) observed, "The Spanish people are more sensitive, and sometimes what is normal in the Anglo culture is too hard for the Spanish people. The Spanish people get hurt or upset."

Pastors noted struggles through racial prejudice, difficulties moving churches forward because of resistance to change, and efforts to address all of the diversity in the church. One African-American female pastor encountered "a group of hostile community members … on a Saturday during worship, [who] entered the sanctuary and stopped the proceedings." Pastors leading cross-cultural-cross-racial churches for the first time find struggling to learn about the people and their needs can be difficult. A number of pastors mentioned the struggle of adjusting their own cultures to the new cultures within which they find themselves. The struggle to deal with a church secretary "who I knew did not have my best interests at heart" posed an immense struggle for an African-American male pastor. African-American pastors in particular mentioned the struggle of adjusting to different cultural mind-sets regarding pastoral authority. A Native American pastor

reported having blatantly racist remarks made to her husband and herself by Anglo members of the congregation she served.

The overwhelming majority of pastors interviewed expressed feeling especially good about working together with congregations to move through the initial period of cross-cultural-cross-racial resistance. Building a sense of global community, helping congregations to learn to appreciate each other, and seeing signs of acceptance by their congregations and communities were viewed as triumphs by a number of pastors. The experience of triumph voiced by one pastor resonates with the understanding of triumph described by many of the other pastors:

> [T]he triumph for me and for the congregation is that it becomes kind of a lighthouse of hopeful stories in a community still struggling with diversity. And I think to the larger churches in our annual conference and to the larger churches in our United Methodist experience, it can become a reference point, as other congregations are experiencing cross-cultural and cross-racial partnerships; they have stories to look back on. So that, to me, becomes a part of the ongoing story of triumph.

Triumph almost universally involvedS the eradication of cultural and racial barriers.

Research Question #3: Attitudes, Beliefs, and Biases

This question deals with implicit and explicit cultural beliefs, attitudes, values, and myths that surface within the context of the pastor's cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. The answer was derived through two methods: first, qualitatively, by analysis of the pastors' reflections shared during the one-on-one pastoral interviews, and, secondly, through a quantitative analysis of the responses pastors and congregants made concerning their congregations' perceived openness to cultural and ethnic differences on the Survey of Congregational Openness. This section explores the results of each method.

Pastors of cross-racial churches believe they have perceived unwarranted

attitudes, biases, and expectations associated with racial, cultural, and economic stereotypes, both from cross-cultural-cross-racial congregants, colleagues, and denominational officials. Anglo pastors who do not speak well are thought unintelligent. "I believe the denominational authorities look at me from the 'poor white' perspective—as someone who lacks leadership or lacks authority, or somehow is not up to snuff with everybody else," says one Anglo pastor. Hispanic pastors mentioned the expectation that they would only be able to speak Spanish in the congregation. Anglo congregations assumed African-American pastors would automatically desire to change their traditional style of worship to the kind of worship that is typically associated with the African-American churches, while an African-American congregation told their Anglo pastor, "You don't understand us because you have white privilege." Another Anglo pastor stated his African-American congregation regretted that he could not preach in the African American style familiar to them.

Female African-American pastors who wear their hair in natural styles ("joy locks" or braids) received queries from their white congregants about their choice or hairstyle (e.g., "Why did you have to do this?") as if their hair was an object of shame or made a political statement. Other pastors have dealt with denominational officials' as well as congregants' assumptions that they do not understand the cultures of others in the church and, therefore, must be taught. They report having dealt with bigotry, racially demeaning comments, and assumptions that they cannot teach people who are racially superior to them. Several pastors reported they have experienced little or no problems in this area. Literally all foreign-born pastors mentioned encountering the attitude that having a speaking accent was tantamount to being ignorant.

Most pastors believe one can facilitate candid conversations about cross-cultural relationships by using words or phrases such as “nonthreatening,” “sensitivity,” “we” (instead of “they” or “them”), and “I” (instead of “you”). Simply discussing the differences in cultural backgrounds with congregants works well for some pastors. Others find using certain phrases and expressions from Scripture and faith, such as “the church family,” “a true church,” a “church for all God’s people,” helps others be open to candid conversations about cross-cultural-cross-racial issues.

Research Question #4: Characteristics Contributing to the Success or Lack of Success of Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Appointments

Pastors agreed in their beliefs that such characteristics as commitment, fellowship, authenticity, truthfulness, good leadership, humor, and Christian love facilitate cross-cultural appointments. Other pastors noted being open-minded, having an open heart, being respectful, and being open to trying something new also help facilitate such appointments. Some pastors believe they should not attempt to lead initially but should observe and follow what others are doing. Other characteristics mentioned were belief in diversity, being prepared to accept change, and servanthood.

Pastors listed several interpersonal hurdles to the success of cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. These hurdles included blatant acts of racism from congregants and/or clergy colleagues, senior pastors who feigned openness to the cultural or racial diversity of their associate pastors, lack of genuine relationships with other colleagues (particularly isolation from peers within the pastor’s own cultural/racial context), and being made to feel inferior by peers “of the other race.” Other hurdles included “following a conflicted pastor who destroyed the church,” “coming into a situation that is

already extremely depressed," and "getting the district and conference to understand that the congregation is beyond the point of being able to be self-sufficient." Several of the pastors mentioned "the good ole boys' network" of promotions as being a major hurdle to the appointment process.

One Hispanic pastor with a more conservative view of Scripture mentioned her hurdle was struggling to be comfortable when the theologically more liberal senior pastor listened to her preach. Practically all ministers for whom English is a second language (or for whom the American pronunciation of English is not normative in their country of origin) mentioned language as a major hurdle.

Anglo pastors serving African-American churches voiced a lack of acceptance by pastors of other denominational churches within the community:

> One of the things I have struggled with is being excluded from the traditional churches. I am a funeral director here, but I am excluded when they call pastors up to participate in funerals. One pastor told me I was not welcomed there.

These pastors know firsthand the pain of exclusion often felt by their minority peers.

Comment [ar25]: Correct

Eight pastors reported not experiencing any hurdles. This group consists of a male pastor of African descent who pastors an Anglo congregation, a Hispanic pastor of an Anglo church (who admittedly does not look Hispanic), two Anglo male pastors and two Anglo female pastors who pastor African-American congregations, one African-American female associate pastor of a multi-racial congregation, and one African-American male pastor. On a case-by-case basis, African-American pastors reported facing more hurdles in their cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments than did their Anglo, Asian, Hispanic, or Native American counterparts.

The length of time pastors had served at their current appointments ranged from

six months to nine years. The overall tenure of pastors serving in cross-racial appointments ranged from six months to thirty years.

Only six of the pastors interviewed described their current cross-cultural-cross-racial pastoral experiences as only "fairly successful" or unsuccessful. One such pastor had been at his present appointment for 5 ½ years, having served cross-culturally for eighteen years. He cited a prior history of congregational division as a contributing factor to the minimal level of success up to this point. Another associate pastor with six months of experience at the present appointment and ten years total experience stated she had enjoyed openness and acceptance from the current congregation but added, "[T]he lead pastor has control issues, and I did not fit in." Another pastor with two years service at his current appointment and a total of six years in cross-racial appointments described the current reality of his situation as coming "out of the honeymoon stage and into the struggle stage." Another Hispanic pastor who had served part-time for one year in a cross-racial setting was appointed there to work with Hispanics. She expressed moderate dissatisfaction with the result of the appointment, feeling she would have been more effective by working full-time. Another pastor who has served her first and only cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment for the past four years, had this observation: "After the first two years it started getting better. I think it would have been more hurtful if I had only been here for a year, and then the bishop decided to move me. They [the congregation] would have not had that opportunity to learn. A cross-cultural appointment should be for at least five years." This pastor's high view of the value and/or success of a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment based upon the process of cross-cultural engagement and learning that only takes place over time reflects the overall consensus of

the majority of the ministers interviewed in this study.

Statistical Procedures and Analyses

Table 4.3 shows the total scores on Congregational Openness ranging from 4.2 to 14.5, with a mean of 11.2 (SD = 1.76). Beliefs and Values total scores ranged from 2.5 to 10.5 with a mean score of 9.0 (SD = 1.19). Mean scores for congregational openness, ranked by both pastors and congregants by jurisdiction, are shown in Table 4.3.[3]

Table 4.3. Congregational Openness and Beliefs by Jurisdictions (N=379)

			Openness		Beliefs & Values	
Group	**Jurisdiction**	**N**	**M**	**SD**	**M**	**SD**
Pastor	Total	39	10.4	2.29	8.6	1.54
	North Central	8	11.1	1.78	9.1	1.18
	Northeastern	4	10.6	1.81	8.7	0.25
	South Central	7	10.3	2.74	8.6	1.74
	Southeastern	13	10.4	2.26	8.6	1.35
	Western	7	9.8	2.97	7.9	2.41
Congregant	Total	340	11.3	1.67	9.0	1.14
	North Central	75	11.4	1.77	8.9	1.31
	Northeastern	39	11.2	1.55	9.0	1.00
	Southeastern	101	11.3	1.63	9.1	0.98
	Western	67	10.8	1.59	8.6	1.30
	South Central	58	12.1	1.49	9.6	0.81

[3] For additional disaggregated data, see Appendix I.

Multiple linear regression analyses were used to assess the pastor and congregant responses on Openness and on Beliefs & Values, controlling for jurisdiction, racial/ethnic group, and gender. Results of these analyses are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Regression Statistics

	B	T
Openness		
Test variable		
Group (pastor/congregants)	0.168	3.268***
Control variables		
Jurisdiction	0.102	2.007*
Race/ethnicity	-0.168	-3.273***
Gender	0.08	1.565
Beliefs and Values		
Test variable		
Group (pastor/congregants)	0.134	2.58**
Control variables		
Jurisdiction	0.08	1.553
Race/ethnicity	-0.16	-3.065**
Gender	0.015	0.298

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

The congregational openness score rendered by congregants (M = 11.3, SD = 1.67) was significantly higher than that rendered by pastors (M = 10.4, SD = 2.29). This disparity indicated pastors did not perceive their cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations to be as open to persons who were different as did the congregants themselves. Also, significant differences were observed in congregational openness scores according to jurisdictions and racial/ethnic groups. Congregants (M = 9.0, SD = 1.14) also gave significantly higher scores to their congregations than did pastors (M = 8.6, SD = 1.54) on beliefs and values. No significant differences were observed for jurisdiction and gender in mean scores for beliefs and values; however, a statistically significant difference was seen for race/ethnicity. Beta weights for race/ethnicity were negative for openness and beliefs and values, indicating negative relationships with the dependent variables.

One-way ANOVAs were run to assess overall differences in scores on openness and on beliefs and values between jurisdictions (see Table 4.5). ANOVAs were selected rather than T-tests in order to get richer data. Results of the ANOVAs[4] indicated significant differences between jurisdictions on congregational openness $F[4,337] = 5.034$, $p<.001$) and on beliefs & values $F[4,318] = 6.022$, $p<.001$.

Post hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD test revealed that the South Central jurisdiction had a significantly higher congregational openness mean score ($p<.001$) than the Western jurisdiction. On beliefs and values, the mean score for the South Central jurisdiction was significantly higher than mean scores for the Western ($p<.001$) and North Central ($p<.05$) jurisdictions. The mean score for the Southeastern jurisdiction was

[4] Though Levene's test of homogeneity of variances indicated equal variances, multiple comparison results using the Brown-Forsythe test were used to reduce the likelihood of Type I error.

also higher than the mean score for the Western jurisdiction, $p<.05$.

Table 4.5. Jurisdictions (N=379)

						95% CI for Mean	
		n	M	SD	SE	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Openness	North Central	83	11.3	1.77	0.194	11.0	11.7
	Northeastern	43	11.1	1.56	0.238	10.6	11.6
	South Central	65	11.9	1.74	0.216	11.5	12.4
	Southeastern	114	11.2	1.73	0.162	10.9	11.5
	Western	74	10.7	1.76	0.204	10.3	11.1
Beliefs & Values	North Central	83	8.9	1.29	0.142	8.6	9.2
	Northeastern	43	9.0	0.96	0.146	8.7	9.2
	South Central	65	9.5	0.98	0.122	9.3	9.7
	Southeastern	114	9.1	1.03	0.097	8.9	9.3
	Western	74	8.6	1.43	0.167	8.2	8.9

M = mean, SD = standard deviation, SE = standard error, CI = confidence interval

To assess overall differences in mean scores for race/ethnicity on openness and beliefs and values, one-way ANOVAs[5] were run. Post hoc analysis using Tukey's HSD test showed that the mean openness score for African-Americans was significantly higher than the mean scores for Native Americans and Anglo-Americans ($p<.01$). In addition, the mean score for Anglo-Americans was significantly higher than the mean score for

[5] Though Levene's test of homogeneity of variances indicated equal variances, multiple comparison results using the Brown-Forsythe test were used to reduce the likelihood of Type I error.

Native Americans (p<.01). Mean scores indicated no significant differences for race/ethnicity on beliefs and values. Table 4.6 shows mean scores for race/ethnicity.

Table 4.6. Race/Ethnicity

						95% CI for Mean	
		N	**M**	**SD**	**SE**	**Lower Bound**	**Upper Bound**
Openness	African-American	119	11.7	1.77	0.162	11.3	12.0
	Asian	24	11.2	1.22	0.249	10.7	11.7
	Caucasian	202	11.1	1.72	0.121	10.8	11.3
	Hispanic	12	11.4	1.83	0.527	10.2	12.5
	Native American	11	9.9	2.34	0.705	8.3	11.5
	Other	6	11.6	2.21	0.900	9.3	13.9
Beliefs & Values	African-American	119	9.2	1.06	0.097	9.0	9.4
	Asian	24	9.2	1.10	0.225	8.8	9.7
	Caucasian	202	8.9	1.22	0.086	8.8	9.1
	Hispanic	12	9.0	0.83	0.241	8.5	9.5
	Native American	11	8.3	2.02	0.610	7.0	9.7
	Other	6	8.2	1.53	0.624	6.6	9.9

M = mean, SD = standard deviation, SE = standard error, CI = confidence interval

One-way ANOVAs to determine differences in overall mean scores for openness and beliefs and values on gender revealed no statistically significant differences. Mean scores for gender are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7. Gender

						95% CI for Mean	
		N	M	SD	SE	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Openness	Male	141	11.0	1.74	0.147	10.7	11.3
	Female	234	11.4	1.78	0.116	11.2	11.6
Beliefs & values	Male	141	9.0	1.11	0.094	8.8	9.1
	Female	234	9.0	1.24	0.081	8.9	9.2

M = mean, SD = standard deviation, SE = standard error, CI = confidence interval

Survey of Congregational Openness: Overall Observations

The Survey of Congregational Openness solicited pertinent information about the pastors' and congregants' perceptions of their congregation's openness to persons who are different—a significant aspect of this study (see Table 4.8). Survey results indicated congregants, as a group, believed their congregations to be more open to relationships and associations with people from different racial/ethnic groups and cultures than did pastors. Congregants displayed a greater expectation than did pastors of their congregations' willingness to seek knowledge and understanding of persons who are different. Pastors and congregants in the South Central jurisdiction indicated their congregations were more likely to enjoy and seek relationships with people from different racial/ethnic groups and cultures than congregants from the Western jurisdiction. Native American pastors and congregants believed their congregations were less likely to enjoy relationships with people who are different. Table 4.8 lists the questions asked pertaining to attitudes, beliefs and biases.

Table 4.8. Subcategories for Survey Responses

Openness Survey Items

- enjoy interacting with all kinds of people
- enjoy being around people whose interests differ from their own
- desire to learn more about people they meet who are different
- do not tolerate others' differences
- have difficulty understanding people who are different
- have close friendships with people who are culturally or racially different
- have conversations about the human rights and equality of people who are culturally or racially different
- examine the causes and effects of inequalities and prejudices
- feel comfortable asking people of other racial ethnicities about their perspectives on racial issues
- enjoy spending time with all kinds of people
- feel afraid around people who are different

Beliefs and Values Survey Items

- believe Christian love shares all things in thanksgiving with those who are different
- believe Christian love expects the best in others
- believe Christian love upholds diverse brothers and sisters in prayer
- believe the church is comprised of every believer of every race or nationality
- believe mutual love and acceptance testify the meaning of Christian discipleship to the world
- believe love is nurtured when Christian fellowship is characterized by humility
- believe Christian love listens and forgives while correcting past errors
- try to understand people's thoughts and feelings when they talk to them
- believe the church is God's possession, purchased through Jesus Chris.

Participants responded to each question as it related to "The people in my congregation."

Congregants surveyed thought their congregations exhibited stronger beliefs about Christian love toward all regardless of race/ethnicity or culture than did pastors. Pastors and congregants from the Western jurisdiction showed less agreement than those from the South Central and Southeastern jurisdictions on their congregations' beliefs about Christian love and fellowship. Pastors and congregants from different racial/ethnic groups tended generally to agree with each other on their religious beliefs. Male and female congregants and pastors also showed agreement in this area.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

As the first decade of the twenty-first century draws to a close, God appears to have inaugurated his reign over a multicolored kingdom in America. The population of immigrants in America is increasing at an unprecedented rate. Researchers speculate that by the year 2050, Hispanics, Asians, African-Americans, Native Americans, and Alaskan Americans will account for 53 percent of the total population in the United States. Anglo-Americans will comprise the remaining 47 percent (Passel and Cohn 8). For American Christians of diverse cultures and nationalities, this trend heralds an extraordinary opportunity to model kingdom living as the body of Christ. Within each of these American racial-ethnic groups, the number of persons who need to be reached with the gospel of salvation is astounding. Never before has Christendom been so remarkably poised to carry out the Great Commission of Christ.

Recently, the Rev. Lovett Weems, a United Methodist researcher, addressed the denomination's Council of Bishops about this exact matter. Responding to a 2005 request to examine data relating to the State of the Church, Weems' study identified emerging questions, contradictions, and implications. His report confirmed what I already suspected: The United Methodist Church in the United States will have a future only if it reaches younger and more diverse people. Considering the fact that the United States is undergoing one of history's most dramatic racial-ethnic shifts, Weems expresses incredulity that the issue of race and ethnicity was not prominent in the denomination's State of the Church report. (Green).

Yancey's statement at a recent national church growth conference concurred with Weems' findings: "Within the next thirty years a shift will occur; mono-racial churches will be the dying churches, whereas multi-racial churches will be the strong and thriving churches" ("Multi-Ethnic Ministry"). Yancey attributes this impending shift to the rise of a new sixth racial group in the United States. In addition to the current racial identification categories (whites, blacks, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics), this emerging group is comprised of a growing population of persons who have a strong preference for a multi-ethnic lifestyle. Yancey says this new sixth group is accustomed to the racially inclusive lifestyle depicted on MTV and other twenty-first century media. They have multiethnic friends, eat multiethnic foods, enjoy experiencing the diverse nuances of multiethnic cultures, and embrace a multiracial lifestyle.

For this emerging racial group, mono-racial churches are irrelevant. Such people, Yancey believes, "will not take their kids to a mono-racial church" ("Multi-Ethnic Ministry"). If Yancey and Weems are right, demise is the predictable future for thousands of mono-racial churches in America.

Personally, I believe this growing predilection toward a multi-racial lifestyle is indicative of a move of God—a stirring of the waters to force American Christians to become the inclusive kingdom they were meant to be. Furthermore, I am convinced that American United Methodists could catalyze a movement and win millions of souls for Christ simply by making cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry this century's priority. The benefits and rewards would be limitless. Relationships among diverse neighbors, schoolmates, and coworkers would be forged and strengthened. Christians would seek to embrace their racially and culturally different neighbors in love, friendship and solidarity.

The United Methodist Church: Positioned to Take a Stand

By sharing differing cultural insights and views through venues United Methodists know well—Christian conferencing, small groups, one-on-one interactions, social justice beliefs, the United Methodist denomination would be able to apply theological principles to glaring systemic and societal problems, and find resolutions that meet the needs of all identity groups. Cultural and racial misperceptions and misconceptions would dissipate. Groups of currently alienated people would be able to come together and resolve problems that neither could resolve alone.

On the other hand, devoid of the global bond of filial love that should characterize the Church, today's rapidly changing cultural milieu will continue to be a breeding ground for the indifference, sectarianism, division, and hatred that presently characterize many ethnic groups in our communities, towns, and cities. As lines of intercultural fracture and demarcation solidify and deepen, the propensity for irrational fear, irreconcilable intercultural conflicts, rivalry, intimidation and domination intensifies.

No single institution is better equipped theologically or philosophically than the Church of Jesus Christ to steer the increasingly multiethnic nation of America out of this boiling pot of cultural and racial crossfire. Moreover, no other institution is better equipped to lead the diverse peoples of this nation into the harmonious, "many-colored kingdom" of God (Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett).

As stated previously, no other single denomination is better equipped than the United Methodist Church, through its connectional infrastructure, to lead the way. God seems to be asking the denomination to do everything within its power to reach out to the culturally-racially diverse peoples in America's rapidly changing neighborhoods, and

welcome them into its worship spaces—with all their many and diverse colors, cultures, beliefs, worship styles, and traditions. If so, The United Methodist Church chooses life. If its mono-racial constituent churches continue to keep their doors tightly closed against the differently colored people in their surrounding neighborhoods, even though their own members are rapidly graying, The United Methodist Church chooses death. Analyzing demographic, social, and ecclesial trends, Weems and Yancey have indirectly prophesied the handwriting on the wall for the United Methodist Church in America. Through their voices and through the voices of pastors serving cross-culturally and cross-racially in this study, God has raised the Shofar and sounded the blast that calls the United Methodist Church to stop serving the idols of self-interest, comfort, and complacency.

I agree with Randy Woodley that Americans must cast aside the ludicrous notion that God's blessing has been on all the ungodly and sinister acts American *Christians* have committed against humanity throughout the nation's history, starting with those of the European colonists. He contends that early European-Americans essentially contextualized the gospel to their culture so successfully that they failed to awaken to the bigness and omnipresence of God around them and in other cultures. Woodley identifies a curse that has resulted from this kind of thinking: "God-controlling idolatry [that] has never left America. It has plagued the inhabitants of our land in every generation and is still evident today through the racism and bigotry—and most often is justified with religious verbiage" (159-60). Over time and to varying degrees, this God-controlling idolatry has started to seep into United Methodist congregations of other cultures and races in America. Fortunately for the denomination, God has a demonstrated history of extending mercy and grace toward sinners who repent of idolatry.

Comment [ar26]: Corrected

Every year, myriads of languishing mono-racial United Methodist churches die throughout the country. Painfully enigmatic is the fact that many of these congregations could be alive and flourishing if their doors were not so tightly shut and bolted against the thousands of *undesirable* multi-racial families and children that God has placed in their midst. Instead of yielding to the opportunity of glorifying God and sharing the gospel of Christ in new and magnanimous ways, these churches choose to serve the gods of individualism, racism, and exclusion. In so choosing, they choose to risk death—physically, spiritually and eternally—rather than to choose the God of love. They would do well to consider the words Joshua spoke to the Israelites as they prepared to enter into the Promised Land:

> [I]f it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. (Josh. 24:15)

Jesus said, "Because you did it to one of the least of these my children, you did it unto me" (Matt. 25:40). Exclusion of God's people, especially those who are poor, oppressed, and disenfranchised, is tantamount to excluding God himself. The church that excludes God is in grave danger.

Throughout the time of Israel's judges, God's people perpetuated a continuing cycle of rebelling against his will and serving other gods. Their rebellion and idolatry eventually led to misery, oppression, and death that lasted for scores—even hundreds—of years. God could have turned away and allowed his people to self-destruct. Instead, he heard their lamenting cries. Whenever his idolatrous people returned to him in humble obedience, he forgave their sin and lavished them with mercy and grace. Then, he

released them from their self-inflicted turmoil, and delivered them into a life of favor and prosperity.

History does repeat itself. The United Methodist denomination has been in a state of visible decline for decades; but even now, God can reverse the curse. When the denomination repents, seeks forgiveness, and obeys God through the dissolution of exclusivist practices, the entire nation will take notice, and God will get the glory. At that time, I believe the hand of God's favor will move, and the United Methodist Church will begin to grow and flourish as never before.

The United Methodist Hope for New Life in the Twenty-First Century

The universal Church has a long-standing history of being able to swim against the tide of rampant fear and intense strife. Christ and his apostles spawned the Church within a socially, religiously, and politically conflicted environment. Notwithstanding, he gave clear and perfect directions for surviving, discipling, and expanding his kingdom throughout the world, even in the face of fear. When used consistently, Christ's plan always works. Its overarching requirement is love.

One kind of congregation is poised to fulfill Christ's commandments to love and make disciples: the redefining congregation. According to Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook, redefining congregations are comprised of Christians who intentionally choose to evaluate all aspects of their congregational life to ensure that people of every culture and race can participate fully in the worship, service, and leadership of their congregation (21-22). Through careful introspection and self-examination every congregation can redefine itself. I believe that once the choice is made to redefine, the next step is to

eradicate irrational, immobilizing fears. The only sure way to accomplish that step is to begin with love.

In his Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught his disciples to go beyond merely doing right things (*orthopraxy*) to doing right things out of a right heart (*orthokardia*). As Christians lift high the cross, Christ calls upon them simultaneously to raise high the standard of love, even for those who do not know how to reciprocate it. Committed Christians do not reserve the option of withholding love from anyone. Neither do they cower in fear, for they know that "[t]here is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18, NKJV).

Nothing can thwart a powerful movement of God like uncontrollable fear. For this reason, Jesus often spoke against being afraid to his disciples. He continued to do so, even as he prepared for his departure from earth.

The words of a person who is about to leave this world are often remembered with great importance. Christ's words, uttered at Galilee just prior to his ascension, were not merely words. They were a critical commission, crafted to dispel fear. Still filled with the power of a death-shattering resurrection, Christ challenged his terrified disciples to accept the transfer of authority he was about to make: "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt. 28:18).

Surely, Christ did not need to convince the disciples he possessed that power. His appearing in such an early post-crucifixion moment should have been evidence enough. Even so, the Scriptures say, "When they saw him, they worshiped him; *but some doubted* [emphasis mine]" (Matt. 28:17).

Upon those who saw and *did* believe, the transfer of power was already taking place—by faith, That gift of power would enable them to follow his leading, carry out his mission, make disciples, and establish his kingdom on earth. With power and conviction, Christ challenged his followers to rise up and claim their identity. To those who now held the keys to the kingdom, he issued the following command:

> All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matt. 28:18-20)

With the coming of Pentecost, each person in the body of Christ has received the gift of the Holy Spirit that enables them to carry out Jesus' great commandment. Similarly, in receiving the gift of Christ's Spirit, the regenerated believer becomes responsible for loving his or her neighbor with the unconditional love of Christ.

Accepting the Call:

A Major Factor Leading to Cross-Cultural-Cross Racial Ministry

The call to "go"—with kingdom authority and power—"and make disciples of all nations" is still Christ's call to Christians today. As Elizabeth Conde-Fraizer, S. Steve Kang, and Gary A. Parrett aptly observe, the Greek word *ethne,* translated "nations," is the plural form of *ethnos,* from which *ethnic* and *ethnicity* are derivatives (64). Without this information, one may omit a critical interpretive aspect of this Matthean passage, namely this understanding: Christ was not speaking about going to political entities or to geographical regions. Rather, he was calling his disciples to distinct groupings of *people.*

The United Methodist pastors in this study represent many who, since 1968, have responded to the call and set their steadfast gaze upon the mission fields. Instead of the

exotic fields of third world nations (the primary venues of mission calls in the earlier years of the last century), these pastors have heard the call to "go" to the domestic fields of human separation and cultural alienation that exist in the churches of America.

The overwhelming majority of pastors in this study stated they entered into cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry in response to the requests and appointments made by their denominational officials (e.g., their district superintendents or their conference Episcopal cabinet, consisting of the bishop and district superintendents). Whereas most of the pastors explained they were willing to go wherever God led them, few had expressed a prior desire for or had attempted to initiate a cross-cultural-cross-racial placement. The group of pastors who entered into cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry by appointment rather than by choice included almost all the African-American pastors, an Anglo-American female pastor, an Asian-American male pastor, a Native American female pastor, and an Hispanic American male pastor.

Those pastors who said, "Yes," they desired a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment included one Hispanic American male, two Hispanic American females, two Anglo-American males, and one Asian-American female. Interestingly, only one African-American pastor, a female, said she had expressed a desire to serve in a cross-racial appointment.

This lack of desire for a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment is not surprising. In January 2008, United Methodist women attending the annual Racial-Ethnic Clergywomen's Consultation reviewed a 2004 study. The study revealed that United Methodist clergywomen of color in the United States do not feel substantive support from the denomination. In addition, they struggle with having too few opportunities for

pastoral appointments and visible leadership roles. Their salaries are lower than their male and majority female counterparts (Aldrich).

Regardless of whether they desired a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment, or simply responded to the request of a district superintendent or bishop, a distinct conviction of following God's divine purpose and will appears to have guided many of these pastors as they accepted their cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. As one such pastor reflected, "Actually, my theological mind tells me that God sent me here." This pastor's theological understanding bears witness to a call of God who, through Christ, is reconciling all things to himself. Those who have been reconciled to God are now called to join Christ in this important work. Like Bonhoeffer in *Life Together*, the pastors in this study learned that life in the shadow of Jesus causes them to acclimate themselves to people who make them feel ill at ease. They realize their work involves bringing people first to reconciliation with God and next with each other and with all of creation. Indeed, the call has been so compelling for some pastors that they have progressed through not one, but multiple cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments down through the years. One Asian-American pastor reports he has served in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments for the past thirty years.

In Chapter 2, I mentioned that the call to follow Jesus in cross-racial ministry is a radical demand. The one called must respond to it in radical faith and commitment. Like Jesus who died utterly alone on the cross, pastors in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry realize that they, too, have been called to bring peace to humanity. Surely, that call comes with a high cost—the cost of leaving behind that which is familiar—of friends, of culture, and even of cherished worship traditions—to "go" and "make disciples" and obey the

command of Christ. Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett paint a sobering picture of the unsettling milieu in which many ministers in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments go to serve. They pose a poignant question:

> What does it mean to be ministers of reconciliation today? The world is ablaze with ethnic and national strife.… The United States continues to be a racially charged society that seems largely unwilling to face both its history and its present realities.… Tragically, it seems that churches themselves have too often been under prophetic indictment concerning such things. As Volf aptly puts it, "Churches, the presumed agents of reconciliation, are at best impotent and at worst accomplices in the strife." (69)

For pastors serving cross-culturally-cross-racially, the answer to Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett's question is simple: One must set aside his or her own agenda and follow Jesus. As these ministers follow Jesus, he takes them out of familiar things, and places them in strange, sometimes challenging circumstances. Whereas Jerusalem is comfortable, familiar, and safe, Jesus leads these pastors into the new, strange, and often hostile territory of Samaria. Along the way, his followers come to understand that they have been called out on a mission to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Interestingly, the Samaritans and Jews were very near to each other geographically, while very far from each other culturally, ethnically, and religiously. Conde-Frazer, Kang, and Parrett are right in calling every believer and every church community to consider the people who represent Samaria to them, and to ask themselves if they have to "pass through [this] Samaria" (John 4:4) even as Jesus passed through his.

Just as Jesus did with his twelve disciples while traveling through the ancient City of Samaria, Jesus invites his present-day cross-cultural-cross-racial disciples to join in his work, saying, "Open your eyes and look at the fields. They are ripe for harvest" (Luke 4:35b, TNIV). The reward is entry into a new family—the family of God's kingdom—a

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kingdom characterized not by domination of Christ's followers but by humble servanthood. Furthermore, the call from Wesley to cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry is fitting. He was the denominational father with the founding tenet, "All the world is my parish!"

The stories of courage, commitment, faith, and fruits shared by the pastors who participated in this study embody the good news of the slow yet necessary change that is taking place in the kingdom of God. These clergy, who represent the 1,650 United Methodist clergy and their predecessors who have served in cross-cultural-cross-racial pastoral appointments in America, are obeying Christ's commission while memorializing Wesley's vision.

One pastor who left her home, her state, the denomination in which she had been ordained in order to follow God's will called her faith journey taking "the Abraham walk." She said, "We left everything to go to the place where God said, 'I'm sending you.'" Like Abraham, pastors who are serving cross-culturally or cross-racially must make a conscious decision to arise, leave their own familiar "Ur of the Chaldees," and follow Christ as he beckons them to come to a new place. Once there they rediscover him—the resurrected Christ. As Christ, he challenges them to recognize him, not just in the familiarity of the past but in the limitless places and diverse faces of new relationships, new communities, new cultures, and a new redeemed kingdom.

From Suffering to Triumph:

The Experiences of Pastors Serving across Cultural and Racial Lines

Pastors who seek or willingly accept cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments are persons who have learned (or are open to learning) to seek and recognize Jesus in

whatever forms he appears. They are like those post-crucifixion disciples whom Matthew describes thusly: “When they saw him, they worshiped him” (Matt. 28:17). Fortunately, many parishioners and congregations who receive cross-cultural or cross-racial pastors have similar open mind-sets. In every sense of the phrase, they welcome their cross-cultural-cross-racial pastors with open minds, open hearts, and open doors as one sent from God.

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Unfortunately, other parishioners (even entire congregations) exist whose minds, hearts, and doors are shut against receiving a pastor of a different culture or race. Ultimately, such a refusal implies a lack of ability to recognize the image of the living Christ in that pastor. These parishioners are like those other post-crucifixion disciples at Galilee of whom Matthew spoke when he said, “When they saw him, they worshiped him, *but some doubted* [emphasis mine]” (Matt. 28:17).

For centuries, many American Christians have found traveling across the globe to do missionary work easier than walking across the street and making friends with neighborhood Christians who are ethnically or culturally different. Moreover, some of these Christians live their entire lives without ever taking the time to enter and experience their neighbors’ communities and cultures. Pastors who serve cross-culturally and cross-racially understand they are called to serve all—even those who doubt their right to stand before them and proclaim the Word of God. They know even at the price of tremendous suffering, hatred, rejection, and isolation, Jesus Christ lived, served, and died in order to offer the kingdom to all—even to those who eventually crucified him. More importantly, these pastors know at the end of crucifixion is the opportunity for resurrection—a

resurrection of unconditional Christian love and the hope of a new life of *koinonia* together in the body of Christ, both now and for eternity!

A consistent thread throughout many of the pastors' stories involved amazing and delightful epiphanies—instances of seeing and leading others to see and understand the world around them through new and varied viewpoints. Cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry allowed pastors and congregants opportunities to experience freedom—freedom from the narrow vision that evolves when groups of people cloister themselves away from the rest of society, where they can focus only on their own little world. Over and over again the joys of discovering and exploring human commonalities (as opposed to focusing on human differences) served to draw pastor and congregations closer and closer together. As one Anglo pastor discovered, cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry provides an opportunity to find a safe haven away from the barriers of exclusion faced in everyday society. "There's an acceptance of all people in this church," he said.

Pastors Reporting the Strongest Congregational Resistance

Hispanic pastors stated their Anglo congregants resisted their exuberant worship, preaching styles, and foreign accents. As a rule, however, the Hispanic pastors who participated in this study expressed a fair level of cross-cultural-cross-racial congregational acceptance.

Of all the racial ethnic groupings involved in this study, African-American and Native American pastors (as a whole) encountered the greatest resistance and toughest challenges upon entering a congregation. They, more than the other pastors, spoke of being subjected to persistent stereotyping (particularly as regards preaching and worship styles), verbal slants, disrespect, exclusion and isolation, lack of support (from

denominational officials, senior pastors, or clergy peers), threats, sabotage by Anglo secretaries, and overt acts of property damage.

On the Survey of Congregational Openness, African-American pastors rated their (Anglo) congregations as being less open to persons who are racially or culturally different (mean=10.2) than did their congregants (mean=11.1). This result (a difference of mean=0.9) denotes a significant incongruence in the level of openness that Anglo congregations *believe* they express towards those who are culturally/racially different and the degree of openness that is *actually experienced* by their African-American pastors. The results are similar (but not as marked) in the reverse situation. Anglo pastors rated their African-American congregations as being less open to persons who are racially or culturally different (mean=11.2) than did their African-American congregants (mean=11.9). The result was a difference of mean = 0.7 (see Appendix I).

Native American pastors also rated their congregations as being less open to persons who are different (mean = 6.3) than did their Anglo-American congregants (mean = 10.7). The result was a difference of mean = 4.4, indicating a sizable disparity between how open the congregation felt they were towards persons who are culturally and racially different, and how the open the Native American pastor perceived them to be. In this instance, no reverse comparison was possible, as no Anglo-American pastors of Native American congregations participated in this study (see Appendix I).

These findings are not surprising, particularly when viewed against the backdrop of Anglo-American dominance that characterizes the history of America. As was mentioned in chapter two, both African-Americans and Native Americans share an early

and (for African-Americans) long-standing history of slavery, servitude, and oppression under colonial European-American slaveholders.

The dynamic initiated when an African-American or Native American pastor serves as the leader of an Anglo-American congregation far transcends the boundaries of a simple exchange of culture and ethnicity. In such an appointment, the African-American or Native American *leader* represents a sub-group with a long-standing historical prototype of servitude and alleged inferiority to Anglo-Americans. Conversely, the Anglo-American *followers* represent a subgroup with a historical prototype of long-standing dominance and alleged superiority over the African-American or Native American pastor who is now, theoretically, their leader. Without careful, sustained, and intentional preparation for such an appointment, as well as commitment on behalf of congregation, pastor, and denominational leaders, such appointments will usually lead to some level of intergroup conflict.

Masden and Mabokela posit leaders of color dealing with diverse groups must deal with followers who may not be supportive. Their findings reveal followers check their perceptions of a leader of color against prototypes while scrutinizing them to determine their capabilities and professional contributions. The authors also cite the following significant findings by Alderfer and Smith. In organizations, two types of groups exist: (1) “identity groups” in which members share common biological characteristics, equivalent historical experiences, subjection to similar social forces, and similar worldviews, and (2) “organization groups” in which members share common organizational positions, participate in common work experiences, and have similar organizational views (36).

Within United Methodist congregations where ministers are appointed cross-culturally—cross-racially, the interrelationship between identity groups (pastor's identity group versus the congregation's identity group) and the prevailing organizational membership (the congregation) has the potential to impact the overall social relations within the congregation significantly. Masden and Mabokela note that intergroup clashes increase when people of different subgroups interact with each other. Majority workers often view such conflict as negative because it requires them to adjust their patterns of interaction with minority counterparts (37).

This dynamic of conflict between identity group and organizational membership appears most pronounced in the case of African-American pastors of predominantly Anglo churches, as opposed to other cross-cultural-cross-racial pairings between pastors and churches. For the African-American pastors in the current study, as well as for the African-American principals in the Masden and Mabokela study, conflicts between African-American leaders and Anglo-American followers evolved first around incompatible goals. In both cases, the nature of goal incompatibility centered around the majority organization's lack of demonstrated commitment to the recruitment of persons of color, the lack of focus on the importance of diversity, and the need for African-American leaders to prove their worth within their settings of leadership. Whereas pastors received appointments to cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations, many complained that neither they nor their congregations received adequate training, mentoring, or support from the denominational officials who appointed them. Masden and Mabokela identify another area of incompatibility for African-American leaders: feelings of self-conflict that emerged as minority leaders dealt with multiple cultural identities in addition to the

complex implications that their race made upon their ability to lead. They learned that Anglo-American followers questioned whether the African-American leaders would be loyal to the collective interests of all participants, or would only promote the interests of African-Americans. This challenge is similar to that reported repeatedly by those African-American pastors in the current study who experienced resistance from their Anglo congregants because the congregation assumed the pastor desired to change the congregation's traditional Eurocentric worship/preaching style to a traditional African-American style.

Tensions and cultural conflicts also erupt when members of the majority cultural group establish the group boundaries, set the norms, and make decisions about what is acceptable without input from the minority leader. Furthermore, when persons of color enter a leadership position in a mostly homogenous organization, Anglo-American followers often formulate misperceptions of bias and distortion that lead them to question the minority leaders' effectiveness. In order to counter the negative impact of such distortions, as well as to reduce the anxiety and stress among followers related to preconceived cultural and racial biases, such leaders spend a large portion of their time developing inclusive relationships. These one-on-one leader-member relationships encourage the development of trust and reciprocity. In addition, minority leaders often find themselves having to be particularly open-minded in their personal and work-related actions and interactions. They view an integral part of their leadership role as the need to turn around their followers, particularly with regard to their ways of interacting with minorities. For example, African-American leaders may try to help Anglo-Americans

understand that color blindness, rather than being a virtue, often prevents members of the dominant culture from being able to see and address the racial realities around them.

McSpadden adds another noteworthy dimension to this discussion. She posits whereas disagreement and conflict in any situation is difficult, the situation is magnified in cases where the pastor (minority leader) and congregation (followers) share different backgrounds. She offers the following insights: “Much of the mutual misunderstanding and error that arise in these situations has to do with the fact that people tend to make judgments based on cultural and racial generalizations, ignoring the wide spectrum of individual and personality differences within a particular ethnic group” (77). Pastors in the current study repeatedly lamented about being pre-judged based on cultural and racial stereotypes. When pastors and congregations receive racial and cultural sensitivity training prior to engaging in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry, they are able to anticipate, curtail, and even avert such misunderstandings.

Power differences between minority and majority members of an organization create conditions that result in the most intense intergroup conflicts. In their study, Masden and Mabokela identified two dynamics related to power differences: (1) Anglo-American followers resented and dismissed the African-American leaders’ authority to change certain of their vocational practices, and (2) Anglo-American followers perceived their minority leaders as “tokens” having little real power (51-52).

Leaders of color may have values, attitudes, traits, and behaviors that are contrary to those of majority group leaders. Instead of a color-blind leadership style (which fails to consider how race influences the way in which leaders of color will be perceived by their culturally-racially diverse followers), a color-conscious leadership style has proven to be

advantageous to leaders of color. Color-conscious leadership allows the leaders, whether principals or pastors, to address intercultural contact among groups as well as to navigate between the two cultures without losing their identity. In fact, the minority leaders noted that developing and practicing a color-conscious philosophy was critical to their survival in their cross-cultural-cross-racial settings (Masden and Mabokela 53-54).

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Pastors Reporting the Greatest Level of Congregational Acceptance

Whereas leaders of color clearly met resistance from the cross-cultural-cross-racial organizational members, the exact opposite is true for Anglo pastors serving African-American United Methodist congregations. Within their appointed congregations, Anglo pastors reported a high degree of acceptance and few to no challenges in the cross-cultural-cross-racial ministries. At first, this finding surprised me; however, after careful reflection, two major factors began to emerge that I believe influence the positive reception of Anglo-American leaders. First, considering the long-standing history of Anglo-American dominance in the United States, minority groups in America are used to Anglo-American leadership. Second, because the United Methodist Church has a history of having excluded its African-American constituents from the denomination's social, political, geographic, and economic mainstream, African-American United Methodists are highly sensitized against exclusion of any form.

Asian pastors of Anglo churches ranked just below Anglo pastors of African-American churches in their reporting of greater congregational openness to their leadership. Nevertheless, Asian pastors reported appreciable resistance by Anglo congregants to their leadership early on, especially in regard to their foreign accents.

Interestingly, the intensity of the intergroup conflict between the minority pastor and Anglo congregation was least intense among the Asians, the minority subgroup with the least amount of negative history.

Christian leaders, such as bishops, district superintendents, and other conference and jurisdictional staff, can help pastors whose congregations refuse to support and receive ministry from them by reminding them of the sober words Jesus spoke after he

had washed his disciples' feet. Jesus said, "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me" (Matt. 10:40). Denominational leaders must be careful to remind these congregations that in rejecting a pastor on the basis of race or culture, they are not only rejecting that person, but the Christ whom that person has been called to represent.

Anglo-American Pastors: Exclusion by Non-United Methodist African-American Pastors

Although Anglo-American pastors reported acceptance by their minority United Methodist congregations, two of the Anglo pastors spoke of feeling disrespected and excluded by African-American pastors of other non-United Methodist churches located in the broader community. Whereas this report is deeply regrettable, historical racial fissures probably play a part in this resistance. For example, as early as the late eighteenth century, blacks began breaking away from mainline Anglo-American churches, including the forerunner denominations of the United Methodist Church. They were reacting to the intra-church segregation and other intolerable racist treatment to which they were being subjected. As they broke away from the mainline Anglo denominations, they adapted the theology and hymnody and created their own churches, which ultimately grew into denominations. Among these denominations are the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and, indirectly, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Framed within Masden and Mabokela's paradigm of intergroup conflict theory, African-American pastors who lead churches in African-American communities are the leaders with power within the context of their own communities (51-55). Their

organizations (African-American congregations) are largely composed of homogeneous (identity) groups, and their followers (parishioners) often share similar values, needs, and expectations (36).

For pastors of many predominantly African-American congregations, a vital aspect of their weekly task is to offer hope to those who feel crushed and hopeless under a social system that devalues their personhood and often excludes them and an economic system that often exploits them. Under such conditions, African-American pastors understandably (although not necessarily commendably) might adopt a "wait-and-see" mentality toward Anglo-American pastors of African-American congregations before openly embracing them.

Insofar as the Anglo-American pastors represent a different identity group historically identified with having power, African-American pastors might reason that by inviting Anglo pastors into their circle, such liaisons could potentially erupt into intergroup conflict. In addition to power conflicts, all the usual properties of intergroup conflict could possibly materialize, including incompatible goals, competition for (human and community) resources, cultural differences, and demands for conformity versus identity with the established identity group (African-American pastors). Furthermore, the possibility that Anglo-American pastors might attempt to impose their affective patterns, cognitive formations, and leadership behaviors upon African-American pastors would potentially pose even greater tensions (Masden and Mabokela 38-39).

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The Need for Ongoing Denominational Support

Pastors need and deserve the visible, verbal support of their denominational leaders who appoint them to cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. One African-American

male who has held multiple cross-cultural-cross-racial pastorates stated denominational leaders who are afraid to stand up for the cross-cultural-cross-racial pastor become a major "hurdle or a stumbling block" to pastor, congregation, and appointment. His remarks reveal his frustration:

> I believe it has been a barrier for the church and for the places where I've been serving—in some cases—to reach their full potential. I think we've got some folk who, for whatever the reason—whether they've been burned, beat up, or whatever—we've got some folk who just seem to take the safe road, the safe way, or the least risky approach. And so that can become a hurdle and a stumbling block. I'm a risk-taker. I don't mind failing. I'm not opposed to trying and having it blow up I my face. But I've had a number of superintendents who are not risk takers and they do not want to take risks on anything that has the potential to not go well.

This pastor and many others would have been encouraged by the words of Bonhoeffer: "A Christian fellowship lives and exists by the intercession of its members for one another, or it collapses" (*Life Together* 86).

A Congregation's Attitudes, Biases, and Beliefs and Their Effects on Their Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Relationships

Foster mentions how whites and blacks in America have difficulty embracing one another cross-culturally because of the values, beliefs and attitudes that thread throughout the history of America. Foster's observation bears particular relevancy in this study. In investigating the attitudes, values, biases, and beliefs of each cross-cultural-cross-racial pastor-congregant relationship, a distinct and distressing pattern emerges. Clearly, America's historical patterns of cultural and racial dominance and oppression, fighting and conquest, discrimination and prejudice continue to influence heavily the experiences of minority pastors serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments.

Characteristics of Successful Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Appointments

When asked to identify the characteristics of successful cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments, pastors listed the following virtues: commitment, fellowship, truthfulness, good leadership, Christian love, open-mindedness, an open heart, respectfulness, openness to trying new things, belief in diversity, preparation to accept change, and servanthood.

These characteristics reveal what is truly important to pastors who serve in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. Many of these pastors know intuitively that the ultimate success of their appointment cannot be measured solely in terms of the usual success indicators (i.e., membership increases, average worship attendance, congregational approval, affirmation and support, increases in giving, or financial solvency). For these pastors, the greatest indicator of their success is their ability to adhere to the advice Paul gave to Timothy:

> Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have confessed so well before many witnesses. (1 Tim. 6:11-12, NLT)

Often these pastors expressed as much or more enthusiasm about their differently defined success than their peers in growing mono-cultural churches.

McSpadden offers another important perspective. She states that cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments represent a systemic issue incorporating an interrelated nexus of programs, processes, and relationships. McSpadden cites lack of clear guidance from the annual conferences as a problem:

> [T]he church as a denomination is clearly the “mover” in the appointment process and, thus, permeates the entire experience prior, during, and following a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment.… Very few annual

> conferences have ongoing procedures in place for guiding cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. (116)

Clearly, the success of cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments is partially the responsibility of the United Methodist bishops and district superintendents who make them, and should be evaluated as such. Denominational leaders and disgruntled congregations often treat committed, hard-working, capable pastors unfairly by branding them as ineffective, when, in actuality, the congregations to which these pastors are appointed are hostile. The problem is exacerbated when the congregation, pastor, or district superintendent (or all three parties) lack training in cross-cultural sensitivity/diversity and intergroup conflict.

In my opinion, three entities—the denominational leaders, the pastor, and the members of the congregation—should enter cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments as a covenant relationship. Each of these three entities should carefully develop, agree upon, and abide by the terms of this covenant. These terms should entail responsibilities for evaluating the success and/or failure of the appointment in terms that are clearly attributable to each of the parties involved—the denominational leaders, the pastor, and the congregation. As one pastor mentioned previously stated, denominational officials must be willing to "stick their necks out" and take some risks if they are fully committed to the cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments they are making. Too much is at stake—the ministry careers, lives, and overall well-being of God's called and willing servants—for all three parties not to take seriously their roles in making such appointments as pleasant, enriching, and successful as possible.

Agreements for preparation for cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments should be specific about the depth of training for denominational officials, pastors, and

congregations. A prescribed course of cultural sensitivity training, discussion of case studies, and role playing should be integral parts of this preparation. *Cultural awareness*—becoming sensitive and open to the personhood of other ethnic groups—is an initial goal. The attainment of *cultural sensitivity*, which emerges as individuals commit to incorporating new knowledge and experiences pertaining to other ethnic groups while seeking advice and consultation from them, is a nonnegotiable second goal. *Cultural competence* is the final goal. Becoming culturally competent demands the valuing of diversity, evaluation of self, comprehension of nuances of difference, acquisition of cultural knowledge, establishment of cross-cultural relationships, and adaptation to diversity within the various cultural contexts. Few denominational leaders, pastors, or congregations have developed cultural competence; however, successful cross-cultural-cross-racial relationships cannot be forged without it (Deymaz 104-05).

Limitations of the Study

The greatest limitation of this study, in my opinion, is the fact that I was unable to interact with these pastors as a whole. Within a group setting, interesting comparisons and contrasts could have been made of the correlations between and among pastors from each of the cultural/racial-ethnic groups (i.e., African-American, Anglo, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American) as they shared their experiences.

Another limitation has been the comparatively low number of pastors who agreed to participate in the study from the Northeastern jurisdiction. As noted previously, one minister attributed this lack of response to the proliferation of survey and research participation requests pastors in the Northeastern jurisdiction receive.

A third limitation relates to the final topic (i.e., denominational participation in and ownership of the success or failure of cross-cultural-cross-racial pastoral appointments). An accurate assessment of the pastors' overall effectiveness is difficult to obtain unless derived in correlation with data pertaining to the existence, extent, content and implementation of previous training on ethnic/cultural sensitivity and intergroup conflict. Whereas the success of the cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment hinges upon the degree to which denominational leaders, congregations, and pastors have developed cultural and racial sensitivity, this data must be considered for all denominational leaders, pastors and congregations involved in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments.

Unexpected Observations

Having served in cross-cultural-cross-racial settings beginning with field educational experiences during my seminary days, I made only a few unexpected observations. The first relates to the fact that the African-American pastors serving Anglo congregations who participated in this study met much greater congregational opposition and resistance than their Anglo counterparts who serve in African-American congregations. Nevertheless, as I began to analyze and interpret the findings of the study, certain patterns began to emerge. Then I began to see clearly how historical relationships of Anglo-American conquest and dominance over African-Americans continue to impact cross-cultural-cross-racial encounters between the two groups. For the first time, I understood the value of how centuries of theological reflection about their segregated condition—as rudimental and simplistic as it may have been—has helped African-American United Methodists to frame even the bitterest experiences of their ecclesial and

societal exclusion within the context of Christ's call to unconditional forgiveness and love.

The second unexpected observation dealt with the intensely negative experiences related by a Native American pastor of Anglo congregation early in the appointment. Again, as I continued to analyze and interpret the data of the study against the historical backdrop of Anglo dominance/Native American conquest, I gained a clearer perspective.

A third surprise of this study related to the educational level of the pastors involved in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. The pastors were, in large part, highly educated as 79.5 percent had college or graduate degrees. Seemingly, the higher the pastor's educational level, the greater the probability that the pastor would be accepted by his or her culturally or racially different parishioners. Based upon the harsh experiences reported by some of these well-educated pastors, the implication is that academic and theological preparation is overridden by cultural and racial bias.

Fourthly, I was surprised by the contrasts between pastors' and congregants' perspectives of their congregations' openness throughout the denomination. Congregants in the study invariably thought their congregations were more open than did their pastors. Several possible explanations exist for this finding. First, even in mono-racial churches, congregants are rarely aware of all the instances of negativity that may be scattered throughout the congregation. Because pastors usually are aware of it and must also be confronted with it, they often personally experience the negative feedback that may be unknown to the congregants responding to the survey. In addition, congregants who are familiar with one another and enjoy each other's company may not be aware of the depth of their prejudice. In both the cross-racial and mono-racial appointments I have served, I

Comment [ar31]: Correct

have heard congregants make occasional prejudicial statements about persons of other races and ethnicities. Since the persons with whom they were conversing did not attempt to challenge their statements, both parties appeared to be oblivious to the sin of their own embedded racism.

Pastors and congregants in the South Central Jurisdiction indicated their congregations were overwhelmingly more likely to enjoy and seek relationships with people from different racial/ethnic groups and cultures than congregants from the Western Jurisdiction. I anticipated the reverse would be true. The Western Jurisdiction includes the states of Washington, California, Nevada, Colorado, Arizona, Wyoming, Hawaii, and Alaska. These states, particularly California and Washington, are known for their high-density multicultural presence. One possible reason for the discrepancy between the high-density multicultural population and the low level of intercultural openness in the West is that as cultural groups have immigrated into the country, they have stayed together and developed their own mono-cultural enclaves. Unless persons in these groups are intentional about taking the time and effort to develop cultural awareness and cultural competency, the likelihood of fear and mistrust between and among so many different ethnic groups is strong.

Another explanation could be lack of awareness on behalf of Westerners that intergroup tensions even exist among their various cultural groups. In the Southeast and South Central states, for example, racial tensions have been the norm historically. Aware that they have a problem with racial prejudice, perhaps southerners have been more prone to seek ways to overcome it. On the other hand, when a group of people is not aware they have a problem, oftentimes the situation becomes worse before the complexity of the

situation is realized.

Native American pastors and congregants in this study felt their congregations were less likely to enjoy relationships with and opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding about people who are different. Whereas this finding was initially surprising, further study of Native American culture yielded several possible explanations. Derald Wing Sue and David Sue list a set of six characteristics as being commonly held as high values among Native Americans: sharing, cooperation, noninterference, time orientation, spirituality, and nonverbal communication. In virtually every instance, these values clashed in their levels of importance within the majority (Anglo-American) culture (315-17).

For example, Native Americans gain honor and respect by sharing and giving, whereas Anglo-Americans gain status by the accumulation of material goods. Native Americans believe the tribe and family take precedence over the individual; therefore they tend to make decisions based upon the good of the group (or tribe) rather than the individual. The majority culture, by contrast, places high importance upon individual achievement and competition. Third, the Native American orientation to life in the here and now clashes with the value the majority culture places upon planning for the future. Finally, the Native American predilection toward nonverbal communication emphasizes learning by listening, while asking few direct questions. Youth learn to avoid direct eye contact with an elder. Each of these values is countercultural to those of the majority culture which values both listening and speaking in conversation, asking questions, and direct eye contact. These and other values represent several points of possible conflict as Native Americans attempt to assimilate to the majority culture (315-17). Sue and Sue also

point out other issues Native Americans may face in cross-cultural situations, including the denial or lack of pride in being a Native American, pressure to adopt the majority cultural values, and feelings of guilt over not knowing or not participating in one's own culture (319).

Finally, I did not expect that pastors and congregants from the Western Jurisdiction would show less agreement than those from the South Central and Southeastern Jurisdictions on their congregations' beliefs about Christian love and fellowship. However, since both the South Central and the Southeastern jurisdictions constitute the southern "Bible Belt," religious beliefs about love, justice and compassion toward others who are different are commonly held as ideals. Unfortunately, southerners who say they believe in these biblical principles do not always practice them. Pastors and congregants from different racial/ethnic groups tended to generally agree with each other on their religious beliefs.

Recommendations for Application of Findings to the Ministry Context

To pastors, I would recommend being proactive in preparing for cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. If the United Methodist Church continues to make such appointments—and it should—the question should be one of "when" a pastor will be called to serve a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment rather than "if" he or she will be called. Pastors should begin now to request sensitivity training for themselves and their potential future cross-cultural-cross-racial congregations.

Congregations have a tremendous role in the success or failure of cross-cultural-cross-cultural appointments. Congregations should engage in serious, in-depth Bible studies and cultural sensitivity trainings to prepare themselves for these appointments.

Thorough training on handling intergroup conflict should be mandatory for prospective cross-cultural-cross-racial pastors and congregations. Not only should congregations concern themselves with understanding the needs and culture of the pastor, but that of his or her spouse and family members as well.

Denominational leaders such as district superintendents, bishops, conference directors/coordinators of ethnic and justice ministries can greatly enhance the chances for success and satisfaction experienced by pastors in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry when they assume and actively demonstrate more responsibility for the ongoing success of such appointments. As persons responsible for making cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments, denominational officials are in a key position to develop, monitor, and evaluate the on-going stipulations of cross-cultural-cross-racial covenants.

Denomination-affiliated seminary leaders and field education supervisors might be more intentional about adding cross-cultural sensitivity training to the learning-serving covenants between seminarians and churches serving as field education placement settings.

Denominational leaders as well as pastors might consider the potential value of making ongoing pastoral counseling and/or coaching available for pastors appointed for the first time to cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry, and especially for pastors appointed to conflicted congregations.

McSpadden aptly points out the need for members of District and Conference Boards of Ordained Ministry to be more sensitive to the cultural and ethnic dynamics of ordination, as well as to ways in which varying experiences of persons from different

cultures and ethnicities impact their values, processes of theological reflection, and approaches to church management (124).

Several annual conferences, including the New York Annual Conference and the California-Pacific have developed in-depth plans for promoting diversity and making cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments. Such plans should be developed and utilized by all annual conferences, and contents should be shared with prospective pastors and churches involved in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments.

Finally, bishops, district superintendents, and other interested denominational leaders would do well to schedule periodic times throughout the year (at least once per quarter) to listen to and learn from pastors about their experiences serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry. Such information would be extremely beneficial for pastors newly appointed to cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

Postscript: How I Am Different

As this project concludes, a personal metamorphosis has taken place. I began the experiential and analytical aspects of this research snugly encased in a shell of familiar, mono-cultural comfort, having been appointed for the first time as pastor of a mono-racial congregation. During the intervening years and months, a transformation has occurred.

Conducting this study has reminded me of how emotionally, physically, and mentally draining cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry can be, yet as I listened to the resounding joy in pastors' voices as they described their triumphs in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry, I rediscovered something that I had almost forgotten. Despite the struggles the pastor of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry encounters, what fuels the

pastor's overall sense of deep accomplishment is the amazing realization that with every cultural bias that is shattered, every wrong attitude that is changed, every eye that is opened to a new vantage point, is an eternal victory for the kingdom of God.

In response to what I have learned through this study, I have emerged from my temporary cocoon of mono-racial familiarity, and have awakened to the startling opportunities for multicultural ministry that God is miraculously placing before me. With excitement, I am developing, with the aid of other leaders in the congregation, an intentional growth plan for multicultural-multiracial ministry.

In addition, I will endeavor to make myself available to befriend pastors who are serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry, as well as those in multicultural ministry. I will do all I can to lend my support to any ministry projects wherein I might offer the revelations and insights I have gained both through my own cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry experiences, as well as those gained through the conducting of this research. In addition, I will continue to reach out and invite others of God's people from different cultural and racial backgrounds to share in our journey as together, as we join hearts, minds, and hands in building up the glorious kingdom of God.

APPENDIX A

PASTORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

[To be read to each interviewee.] These questions are being asked of selected pastors chosen from a larger random sampling of ministers serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry from each of the five jurisdictions of the United Methodist Church in the United States. It is part of a cross-sectional doctoral study. Neither you nor your church will be identified by name or any other means during this study without your written permission. The results of these taped interviews will be to help interpret the overall experiences of ministers serving in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

To keep the interviews standard, please answer only the questions asked as you relate your own experience of cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry.

1. Did you desire a cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment? If yes, what were some of your reasons? If no, what were some of your objections?

2. Who initiated your cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment?

3. What circumstances led to this cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment?

4. What has been your experience in cross-cultural-cross-racial ministry (advantages, disadvantages, struggles, triumphs)?

5. What attitudes, beliefs, and/or biases about persons of your racial or cultural heritage do you perceive in your interactions with racially or culturally different members of your congregation and denominational officials?

6. Which words, phrases, and terminology best facilitate candid conversations about cross-cultural-cross-racial relationships? Which should be avoided?

7. What characteristics best facilitate cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments for your congregation?

8. What have been the major interpersonal, intercongregational, and/or interdenominational hurdles to the success (or lack thereof) of this appointment?

9. How long have you served at your present cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment?

10. If this is cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment is not your first, what has been your total length of tenure in cross-cultural-cross-racial appointments?

11. How well has your cross-cultural-cross-racial appointment gone?

APPENDIX B

SURVEY OF CONGREGATIONAL OPENNESS

This survey asks questions about the disposition of individual Christian congregations toward persons who are different. The survey also examines how a congregation's interpretation of Scripture informs congregational openness toward such persons.

Instructions: Please read each statement, one through twenty (1-20) carefully. Respond to each by expressing the extent to which you believe the statement describes your congregation's overall openness to, experiences with, attitudes about, and biblical responsibility toward persons who are different. Circle the number beneath each statement that corresponds with your choice. For questions twenty-one through twenty-six (21-26), please place a check mark beside the appropriate response. **There are twenty-six (26) questions in this survey**.

You need not sign your name. Your responses will be kept completely anonymous. No attempt will be made to identify the participants in this study.

1 - Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly Disagree; 4 - Slightly Agree; 5 – Agree; 6 – Strongly Agree

The people in my congregation:

1. **enjoy interacting with all kinds of people.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

2. **enjoy being around people whose interests differ from their own.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

3. **believe Christian love shares all things in thanksgiving with those who are different.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

4. **desire to learn more about people they meet who are different.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

5. **do not tolerate others' differences.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

6. **believe Christian love expects the best in others.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

7. **have difficulty understanding people who are different.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

8. **believe Christian love upholds diverse brothers and sisters in prayer.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

9. **have close friendships with people who are culturally or racially different.**
   1 2 3 4 5 6

10. **have conversations about the human rights and equality of people who are culturally or racially different.**
    1 2 3 4 5 6

11. **believe the church is comprised of every believer of every race or nationality.**
    1 2 3 4 5 6

12. examine the causes and effects of inequalities and prejudices.
1 2 3 4 5 6

13. feel comfortable asking people of other racial ethnicities about their perspectives on racial issues.
1 2 3 4 5 6

14. believe mutual love and acceptance testify the meaning of Christian discipleship to the world.
1 2 3 4 5 6

15. enjoy spending time with all kinds of people.
1 2 3 4 5 6

16. believe love is nurtured when Christian fellowship is characterized by humility.
1 2 3 4 5 6

17. believe Christian love listens and forgives while correcting past errors.
1 2 3 4 5 6

18. feel afraid around people who are different.
1 2 3 4 5 6

19. try to understand people's thoughts and feelings when they talk to them.
1 2 3 4 5 6

20. believe the church is God's possession, purchased through Jesus Christ.
1 2 3 4 5 6

21. What is your ethnicity?
- **a. ___African-American**
- **b. ___Asian**
- **c. __ Caucasian**
- **d. ___Hispanic**
- **e. ___Native American**
- **f. ___Pacific Islander**
- **g. ___Other (please list)**

22. In what type of setting is the church located
- **a. ___Urban**
- **b. ___Suburban**
- **c. ___Rural**

23. Check the vocational category that best fits you
- **a. ___Architecture and Engineering**
- **b. ___Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, Media**
- **c. ___Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance**
- **d. ___Business and Financial Operations**
- **e. ___Community and Social Services**
- **f. ___Computer and Mathematical**
- **g. ___Construction and Extraction**
- **h. ___Education, Training, and Library**
- **i. ___Farming, Fishing, and Forestry**
- **j. ___Food Preparation and Serving Related**
- **k. ___Healthcare Practitioners and Technical**
- **l. ___Legal**

m. ___Life, Physical, and Social Science
n. ___Management
o. ___Military Specific
p. ___Office and Administrative Support
q. ___Personal Care and Service
r. ___Production
s. ___Protective Services
t. ___Retired
u. ___Sales and Related Occupations
v. ___Transportation and Material Moving

24. Not a High School Graduate

a. ___High School Graduate
b. ___Community College or Technical School Graduate
c. ___Some College
d. ___College Graduate
e. ___Graduate or Professional School

25. What is your gender?
a. ___Male
b. ___Female

26. **What is your age? _____**

APPENDIX C

PASTOR'S INTRODUCTORY LETTER

December 12, 2007

Dear _____:

Thank you for agreeing to assist in this research project! As previously stated, I am a United Methodist pastor, and a Doctor of Ministry participant at Asbury Theological Seminary. I am conducting research on the "Experiences of United Methodist Ministers Serving in Cross-Cultural/Cross-Racial Appointments." I would like to survey you, as pastor (or associate pastor), and ten people from your congregation as part of a representative sample of congregations across the five geographical jurisdictions who meet the established criteria.

This criterion-based survey deals with openness to persons who are different from the prevailing culture and/or race of the congregation. **I want to assure you that your responses will be kept confidential. I do not want to jeopardize your relationships in your church, so I will not ask for your name on the survey.** The data will be collected using a code (the abbreviated names of your Jurisdiction, Conference, Church, and the number of your survey) and all of the surveys will be collated to give a blended view rather than identify any one person.

My prayer is that churches from around the country will be helped because you and others like you have taken the time to participate. Once the research is completed in approximately four months, I will destroy the individual surveys and keep the data electronically for an indefinite period, at least until my dissertation is completed and approved.

I realize that your participation is voluntary, and I sincerely appreciate your willingness to consider being part of the study. Please know that you can refuse to respond to any or all of the questions on the survey. Also, feel free to call or write me at any time if you need any more information. My office phone number is 336-889-4501, fax is 336-889-4433, and my e-mail addresses are memorialumchp1@northstate.net or jkeaton387@cs.com.

NOTE: SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON COMPLETING THE SURVEY.

Sincerely,

Reverend Jessie C. Keaton

I volunteer to participate in the study described above and so indicate by my signature below:

Your signature: _____

Date: _____

Please print your name:

_____

APPENDIX D

PASTOR'S INTSTUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING SURVEYS

- SCHEDULE A DATE AND TIME TO ADMINISTER ALL SURVEYS AT THE SAME TIME, PREFERABLY IMMEDIATELY AFTER A CHURCH SERVICE OR BIBLE STUDY.
- RANDOMLY SELECT TEN MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION (NINE ADULTS AND ONE YOUTH (AGES 12-17) TO TAKE THE SURVEY.
- NOTIFY THE PARTICIPANTS THAT THIS SURVEY WILL TAKE APPROXIMATELY FIVE MINUTES TO COMPLETE.
- GIVE THE PARTICIPANTS THE "CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY INTRODUCTORY LETTER." ALLOW TIME FOR THEM TO READ THE LETTER AND TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS. (REFRAIN FROM MAKING ANY COMMENTS ABOUT THE SURVEY BEYOND THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE LETTER.
- ASK THE PARTICIPANTS TO COMPLETE THE 26 SURVEY ITEMS ON THEIR OWN, IN SILENCE.
- (YOU, THE PASTOR, WILL COMPLETE THE SURVEY MARKED "PASTOR"
- WHEN THE PARTICIPANTS HAVE FINISHED BOTH PAGES OF THE SURVEY, ASK THEM TO CHECK OVER THEIR FORMS TO CORRECT ANY AND ALL OMISSIONS AND ERRORS.

Four Easy Steps for Completing The Process

WHEN FINISHED, ASK THE PARTICIPANTS TO PLACE THEIR SURVEYS FACE DOWN AT A DESIGNATED PLACE, AND TO EXIT QUIETLY AS OTHERS ARE STILL WORKING. :

1. WHEN ALL **"MEMBERS' SURVEYS"** HAVE BEEN COMPLETED AND COLLECTED, STACK THEM AND LAY THEM ASIDE.

2. PLACE THE FOLLOWING TWO FORMS ON TOP OF THE "MEMBERS SURVEYS"):
    a. ONE SIGNED AND DATED COPY OF THE **PASTOR'S INTRODUCTORY LETTER** (BE SURE TO PRINT YOUR NAME ON THE LINE UNDERNEATH THE DATE)
    b. YOUR (PASTOR'S) COMPLETED CONGREGATIONAL OPENNESS SURVEY
    c.
3. **CHECK TO MAKE CERTAIN THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE PLACED INSIDE THE SELF-STAMPED/SELF-ADDRESSEDMANILA ENVELOPE BEFORE SEALING:**
    a. _____ PASTOR'S SIGNED, DATED INTRODUCTORY LETTER
    b. _____ PASTOR'S COMPLETED CONGREGATIONAL OPENNESS SURVEY
    c. _____ TEN (10) COMPLETED "MEMBERS' SURVEYS"

4. PLEASE TAKE THE STAMPED MANILA ENVELOPE TO THE POST OFFICE AND DROP INTO THE METERED MAIL DROP THE SAME DAY!

THANK YOU! YOU HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE SURVEY PROCESS! YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED BY EMAIL WHEN THIS U.M. RESEARCH STUDY HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND PUBLISHED!

APPENDIX E

CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY INTRODUCTORY LETTER

December 12, 2007

Dear Church Member:

I am a United Methodist pastor, and a Doctor of Ministry participant at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. I am conducting research on the "Experiences of United Methodist Ministers Serving in Cross-Cultural/Cross-Racial Appointments." Currently, I am surveying the pastor and ten people from a representative sample of United Methodist congregations across the five geographic jurisdictions who meet the criteria. You have been selected randomly from your church as one invited to assist in the study.

This survey deals with openness to persons who are different from the prevailing culture and/or race of the congregation. **I want to assure you that your responses will be kept confidential. I do not want to jeopardize your relationships in your church, so I will not ask for your name on the survey.** The data will be collected using a code (the abbreviated names of your Jurisdiction, Conference, Church, and the number of your survey) and all of the surveys will be collated to give a blended view rather than identify any one person.

My prayer is that churches from around the country will be helped because you and others like you have taken the time to participate. Once the research is completed in approximately four months, I will destroy the individual surveys and keep the data electronically for an indefinite period, at least until my dissertation is completed and approved.

I realize that your participation is voluntary, and I sincerely appreciate your willingness to consider being part of the study. Please know that you can refuse to respond to any question on the survey. Also, feel free to call or write me at any time if you need any more information. My office number is 336-889-4501 and my e-mail address is memorialumchp1@northstate.net.

After carefully completing and rechecking all 25 survey items, please take your completed form to the designated place and lay it face down in a stack. You may leave quietly.

Thank you for your help! May God bless you tremendously for your time and contribution to this valuable study. Your pastor will be informed by e-mail when the research project is complete and the dissertation has been written.

Sincerely,

Jessie C. Keaton

Senior Pastor, Memorial United Methodist Church
1327 Cedrow Drive
High Point, North Carolina 27260
Phone: (336) 889-4501
Fax: (336) 889-4433
Email: Memorialumchp1@northstate.net; or jkeaton387@cs.com

APPENDIX F

E-MAIL LETTER TO UNITED METHODIST BISHOPS

From: Pastor [memorialumchp1@northstate.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2007 12:10 PM
To: United Methodist Bishops in the United States

Subject: Important! UMC Research Project

Dear Bishop,

My name is Jessie Keaton. As a 2008 candidate for the Doctor of Ministry degree at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, I am completing a research study on "The Experiences of United Methodist Ministers Serving in Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Appointments."

I wanted you to be aware of the purpose and content of this study in advance, as I will soon be contacting randomly selected clergy from your Episcopal area to complete a brief survey (along with 10-15 members of their congregations). In cases where clergy appointments have changed, I may request your assistance in designating a substitute minister to survey from your Episcopal area.

The survey has been properly pretested, validated, and refined. It is fairly brief and non-offensive. It is my intent to conduct this survey with utmost Christian courtesy, respect, sensitivity, and professionalism towards all clergy and laity participants.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments (see contact information below). Bishop, I heartily welcome any information that you can share to enhance or enrich this study, and/or to expedite the process of surveying and collecting data.

Contact Information:

Reverend Jessie C. Keaton
C/o Memorial United Methodist Church
1327 Cedrow Drive
High Point, North Carolina 27260
Phone: [11/29/07 thru 12/06/07 @ Asbury Seminary – 859-858-0273]
Phone: (336) 889-4501 (Office)
(336) 885-8597 (Home)
(704) 408-8469 (Cell)
Email: jkeaton387@cs.com; also, memorialumchp1@northstate.net
Fax: (336) 889-4433

Sincerely,
Jessie C. Keaton

File://E:\Email message 112707Important! UMC Research Project.htm

APPENDIX G

E-MAIL PERMISSION LETTER: KREGEL PUBLICATIONS

Subject: **Re: Permission to Use Prejudice and the People of God Bullets Pages 39-40**
Date: **Fri, 29 Apr 2005 13:30 EST**
From: **Wendy Yoder <wendy@kregel.com>**
To: **<Jkeaton387@cs.com>**

Dear Jessie:

Thank you for your interest in quoting material from our publication Prejudice and the People of God by A. Charles Ware. We are pleased to grant the permission you request.

There is no charge. Please footnote or acknowledge the source. For your information, a sample credit is shown below.

CREDIT LINE: "Taken from Prejudice and the People of God © 2001 by A. Charles Ware. Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission of the publisher. All rights reserved."

Thanks for requesting permission.

Blessings,
Wendy

--
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4/29/2005

APPENDIX H

E-MAIL PERMISSION LETTER: SONYA GONSALVES

Subject: **RE: permission to use part of Experiences and Attitudes Scale**
Date: **Fri, 29 Apr 2005 16:38 EST**
From: **"Gonsalves, Sonia <Sonia. Gonsalves@stockton.edu>**
To: **Jkeaton387@cs.com**

Jessie,

I am pleased that you are considering using a part of our instrument in your dissertation. You have our full permission to use any and all parts of the survey in whatever way you choose. If you would like more information about the psychometric properties of the instrument from our population (freshmen at a 4-year public institution), we would be happy to share those with you.

Good luck with your research.

Sonia V. Gonsalves
Professor of Psychology
Assessment Coordinator
The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
609-652-4622

APPENDIX I

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR PASTORS AND CONGREGANTS BY GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY, EDUCATION LEVEL, AND AGE

				Openness		Beliefs & Values	
			n	M	SD	M	SD
Gender	Pastor	Male	24	10.5	2.28	8.9	1.25
		Female	15	10.2	2.37	8.1	1.87
	Congregant	Male	117	11.1	1.60	9.0	1.09
		Female	219	11.5	1.71	9.1	1.17
Race/Ethnicity	Pastor	African-American	20	10.2	2.32	8.7	1.34
		Asian-American	6	11.3	1.30	9.1	1.15
		Anglo-American	9	11.2	1.69	8.7	1.37
		Hispanic American	2	10.8	3.22	9.2	0.14
		Native American	2	6.3	2.97	5.2	2.88
	Congregant	African-American	99	11.9	1.48	9.3	0.98
		Asian-American	18	11.2	1.23	9.2	1.12
		Anglo-American	193	11.1	1.73	8.9	1.21
		Hispanic American	10	11.5	1.68	8.9	0.91
		Native American	9	10.7	1.31	9.0	1.00
		Other	6	11.6	2.21	8.2	1.53
Education Level	Pastor	Below High School	1	13.0	.	9.1	.
		High School Graduate	1	13.6	.	10.1	.
		Comm./Tech. College Graduate	3	12.2	0.78	9.9	0.64
		Some College	3	10.9	2.69	8.2	2.19
		College Graduate	5	10.2	2.05	8.9	1.10

				Openness		Beliefs & Values	
			n	M	SD	M	SD
		Graduate School	26	10.0	2.31	8.4	1.61
	Congregant	Below High School	26	11.9	1.66	9.2	1.01
		High School Graduate	61	11.1	1.60	9.0	0.98
		Comm./Tech. College Graduate	36	11.6	1.86	9.0	1.40
		Some College	52	11.7	1.57	9.3	0.83
		College Graduate	84	11.3	1.67	9.0	1.21
		Graduate School	70	10.9	1.66	8.8	1.30
Age	Pastor	36-45	5	10.8	2.04	8.3	1.90
		46-55	19	9.8	2.73	8.2	1.71
		56-65	11	10.9	1.62	9.0	1.16
		66 and above	2	12.1	1.07	9.6	0.63
	Congregant	18 and below	23	12.3	1.44	9.1	0.95
		19-35	23	11.2	1.64	9.0	1.19
		36-45	38	12.0	1.66	9.3	1.06
		46-55	81	11.1	1.61	9.1	0.97
		56-65	71	11.5	1.62	9.2	0.99
		66 and above	86	11.0	1.71	8.8	1.38

APPENDIX J

PEARSON'S PRODUCT-MOMENT

CORRELATION/RELIABILITY MATRIX

Factor I (Cronbach's Alpha = .869)

2. enjoy interacting with all kinds of people.
4. enjoy being around people whose interests differ from their own.
8. have difficulty understanding people who are different.
10. do not tolerate others' differences.
16. try to understand people's thoughts and feelings when they talk to them.

Factor II (Cronbach's Alpha = .798)

3. enjoy spending time with all kinds of people.
7. feel afraid around people who are different.
12. desire to learn more about people they meet who are different.

Factor III (Crombach's Alpha = .835)

18. have close friendships with people who are culturally or racially different.
19. have conversations about the human rights and equality of people who are culturally or racially different.
20. examine the causes and effects of inequalities and prejudices.
22. feel comfortable asking people of other racial ethnicities about their perspectives on racial issues

Factor IV (Cronbach's Alpha = .936)

38. believe mutual love and acceptance testify the meaning of Christian discipleship to the world.
39. believe love is nurtured when Christian fellowship is characterized by humility.
40. believe Christian love listens and forgives while correcting past errors.
41. believe Christian love upholds diverse brothers and sisters in prayer.
42. believe Christian love expects the best in others.
43. believe Christian love shares all things in thanksgiving with those who are different.
44. believe the church is comprised of every believer of every race or nationality.
45. believe the church is God's possession, purchased through Jesus Christ.

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